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Knight Templar 1120–1312



Helen Nicholson • Illustrated by Wayne Reynolds



HELEN NICHOLSON is Reader in History at Cardiff University. She has written extensively on the history of the military orders, the crusades in general and the Templars in particular. Her best-known publications include: *The Knights Templar: A New History* (Sutton Publishing, 2001) and *Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights: Images of the Military Orders 1128-1291* (Leicester University Press, 1993).



WAYNE REYNOLDS was born in Leeds, UK, and attended art college in Middlesbrough. He has worked as a professional artist since 1991, and has created material for many gaming companies, working on figures, landscapes and interiors, as well as providing core characterisation. He is best known for his work on titles such as *2000AD*, *Slaine*, and *Judge Dredd*. Wayne is also a keen modeller and historical re-enactor.

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Wayne Reynolds, 5 Kirkstall Mount, Kirkstall, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS5 3DT, UK

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KNIGHT TEMPLAR

1120-1312

INTRODUCTION

The Templars were religious men who followed a religious lifestyle based on prayer, and who also vowed to defend Christians and Christian territory against non-Christians. They formed a religious order, an organisation acknowledged by the Catholic or 'Latin' Church as having special rights and duties in society. Members wore a distinctive uniform, or 'habit', and lived a communal lifestyle in the properties belonging to the order. They followed a Rule, approved by the pope, which set out their daily routine and lifestyle. The Templars' contemporaries saw them as skilled and fearless warriors who played a leading role in the defence of Christendom against its enemies. The Order was set up in 1120 and was dissolved by the pope in 1312.

The Templars began in the wake of the First Crusade. The crusaders had captured the city of Jerusalem in July 1099, and some warriors from Western Europe stayed in the city after it was captured. One account states that a group of these warriors began to follow a religious way of life in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built on the reputed site of Christ's empty tomb, the most important shrine of the Christian faith. But as pilgrims on their way to the Holy Sepulchre came under attack from Muslim bandits on the road to Jerusalem, these warriors decided that the new kingdom of Jerusalem needed fighters more than it needed men who simply prayed. So they formed a military religious brotherhood and vowed to use their military skills to protect Christians. Military religious brotherhoods or *confraternities* were not a new idea: some warriors who had taken part in the First Crusade had formed brotherhoods to fight together and share booty, while in Western Europe military religious brotherhoods of knights had formed to protect monasteries from marauding bandits.

In January 1120 the little group of warriors went to the Church council at Nablus, which all the clergy of the kingdom of Jerusalem attended, and asked for official Church approval for their new group. The clergy agreed, and the king of Jerusalem, Baldwin II, gave them his palace in the former Aqsa mosque on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The Western Europeans in the Holy Land (known as 'Franks' to the Muslims) called this building 'The Temple of Solomon', and so the new group became 'the Order of the Temple', and its members were 'Templars'. To be a true religious order of the Church, the group also needed the approval of the pope. This came in January 1129, at the Church Council of Troyes in north-eastern France.

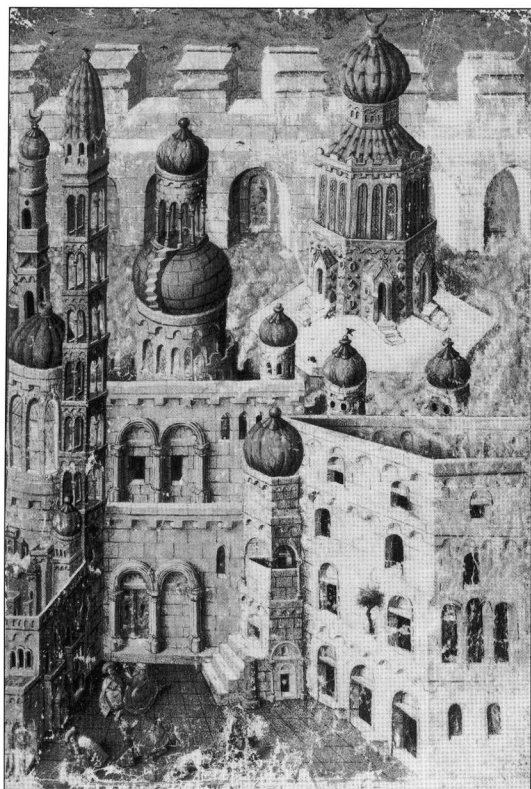
The Templars not only defended pilgrims in the region conquered by the crusaders, which the Western Europeans called Outremer ('The land overseas'), but also helped to defend the borders of the new crusader



Map of the coastal area conquered by the crusaders in the First Crusade and later, and the surrounding region. Major towns and cities are shown, with a selection of significant Templar sites and the battlefields mentioned in this book. (Nigel Nicholson)

states against hostile neighbours, both Muslim and Christian. In the West, some rulers saw that the Templars could play a useful role in defending their territories too against non-Christians. So the Templars were given frontier land to defend in the Iberian Peninsula and in Eastern Europe. Other landowners, well away from the frontiers, gave land endowments to the Templars to support their work of protecting Christendom. So while the Templars' main military operations took place in Outremer and the Iberian Peninsula, all across what is now Europe Templars were running farms and engaged in commercial operations to raise funds to support their Order's work on the frontiers.

The chief officer of the Order was the master, who was elected by the brothers at the Order's headquarters in the East, called 'the convent'. As the Order's territorial possessions grew, the brothers developed a devolved structure. The Order's lands were divided into provinces, each



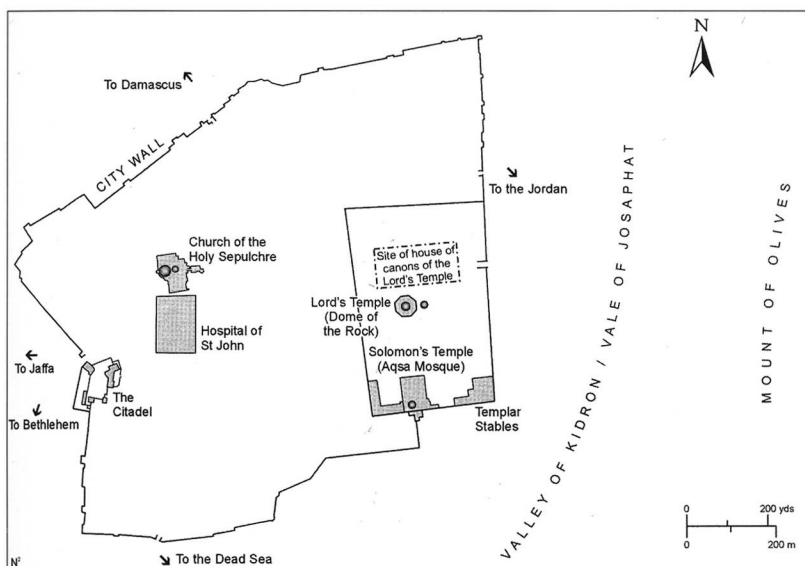
The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, constructed by Emperor Constantine I (d. 337) over the reputed site of Christ's empty tomb, is the central shrine of Christianity. This is a 15th-century view of the church, with the Dome of the Rock behind. The artist has exaggerated the height of the buildings in proportion to their width, but the general design is reasonably accurate. Built by Caliph Abd al-Malik between 688 and 691, the Dome of the Rock was probably designed deliberately to mimic the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, hence the close resemblance between the two buildings. But whereas the central part of the Church is circular, the Dome of the Rock is octagonal (BL MS. Egerton 1070 fol. 5: by permission of the British Library).

with a manager called a 'grand commander' to oversee it. Within each province the Order's property was organised around 'commanderies' (or preceptories, to use the Latin term), each administered by an official called a commander. The typical rural commandery was effectively a large farmhouse where a few brothers could live, with perhaps a chapel and accommodation for travellers, and extensive farm buildings. The commandery acted as a central administrative base for the Order's property in a certain locality. Outlying properties, called *camerae* or chambers, might be let out to tenants or run by a single brother. The commander of each commandery was supposed to pay a certain portion of its annual income, called a *responsion*, to the provincial grand commander, who sent the money to the Order's headquarters in the East. The provincial grand commander would hold annual meetings called 'chapters' – the usual term for a meeting of members of a religious order – at which the commanders would present their accounts and pay their responsions. The Order held general chapter meetings every few years, to which all the grand commanders came with the responsions from their provinces. These general assemblies also appointed new officials and passed ordinances. So although the brothers were scattered across Christendom, they kept

in touch with headquarters through the system of chapter meetings, and also through regular newsletters sent from the brothers in the East to the brothers in the West.

The Order of the Temple was the first of the military religious orders set up to defend Christendom, but many others followed. After the Templars received official Church recognition in the 1120s the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, which housed and cared for poor pilgrims in Jerusalem, also began to finance military protection for pilgrims. The Teutonic Order was founded in Acre in the late 12th century, while other military religious orders were founded in the Iberian Peninsula and in north-eastern Europe. These organisations followed the Templars' original concept of serving God through fighting those who attacked Christians, and some of them followed the same religious rule as the Templars. The Templars also helped to inform Christians in Western Europe about events in the East and encouraged them to send aid and to support their fellow-religionists. Although they ultimately failed to save Outremer, through their military skill and dedication they prolonged its existence.

The Order came to an end in the early 14th century. After the loss of Outremer to the Mamluk sultan of Egypt in 1291, the Templars set up their headquarters on the island of Cyprus, hoping to organise a new crusade. But in 1307 King Philip IV of France accused them of heresy and witchcraft. The charges were certainly false, but the Order fell victim to the French king's own financial and political problems. The trial of the Order was indecisive, and Pope Clement V announced that the charges were unproven, but the Order's reputation was so damaged that he



LEFT Plan of Jerusalem in the 12th century, showing some of the main buildings. The Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre were in the care of communities of Augustinian canons, priests following a monastic lifestyle. The Hospital of St John cared for poor sick pilgrims as well as supplying military protection for the pilgrims as they travelled to the holy places. Pilgrims would visit the Holy Sepulchre and other holy sites in the city, then travel via the Vale of Josaphat, where the Virgin Mary was buried, to the River Jordan for ceremonial bathing (Nigel Nicholson).

dissolved the Order and gave its property to the military religious Order of the Hospital to carry on the Order's vocation of defending Christendom. In the Iberian Peninsula, where the military religious orders' vocation of defending Christian frontiers against Muslim attack was still very much alive, and with increasing Muslim piracy along the coasts, new military religious orders were set up using the property of the former Order of the Temple.

Were the Templars unique? They inspired or encouraged the growth of other Christian military religious orders, and a casual onlooker might assume that the Templars invented the concept of religious warfare. Yet the concept of the warrior saint was very familiar in Eastern Christianity long before the Templars. The Byzantine Greeks had for centuries venerated warrior saints such as St George, St Theodore Tiron and St Mercurius. These were Christians who had used their warrior skills in God's service. Nor is the concept of the religious warrior peculiar to Christianity. The Muslim voluntary religious military organisation called the *rabat*, which flourished at the same period as the Christian military orders began, was made up of men who served God for a short period as warriors. More extreme were the military monks of Japan in the same period, who armed themselves and went into battle to defend the interests of their monastery. The Templars were not monks, because they did not live in enclosed houses; and they did not fight to promote their own interests, but to protect all people who held the same religious faith as they did. Unlike the warriors of the *rabat* and unlike ordinary crusaders, the Templars served for life. The Templars and the military religious orders that followed them adapted the familiar concept of religious warfare into a novel institution.



ABOVE A view inside the Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. Called 'the Temple of Solomon' by westerners, the mosque was the original headquarters of the Templars, given to them by King Baldwin II of Jerusalem in 1120 (David Nicolle).

The Templars were entrusted with the care of fortresses in troubled areas of Christendom, where the ruler could not trust the secular lords; and they built fortresses of their own in order to protect their property. This is their fortress of Vrána in modern Croatia, showing the south-east tower and ditch (Lelja Dobronic).



CHRONOLOGY

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| <p>1095 The FIRST CRUSADE is called by Pope Urban II.</p> <p>1099 Jerusalem is captured by First Crusade; the kingdom of Jerusalem is established.</p> <p>c. 1119 A group of knights connected to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem found a religious brotherhood to fight Muslim bandits in the kingdom of Jerusalem.</p> <p>1120 The clergy of the Church Council at Nablus agree that the new brotherhood is a valid religious order and King Baldwin II of Jerusalem gives the brothers his palace in the former Aqsa mosque: 'the Temple of Solomon', so they become 'Templars'.</p> <p>1128 Countess Teresa of Portugal promises the Order of the Temple the castle of Soure on the Muslim frontier of Portugal.</p> <p>1129 Council of Troyes (in Champagne, France). The Order of the Temple receives papal approval and the Latin religious rule of the Order is established.</p> <p>Early 1130s Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, writes 'In praise of the new knighthood' for Hugh de Payns, master of the Order of the Temple, to encourage the new Order.</p> <p>1131 Count Ramon Berenguer III of Barcelona gives the Templars the border stronghold of Granyena.</p> <p>1134 King Alfonso I of Aragon dies, bequeathing his kingdom to the Templars, the Hospitallers and the canons of the Holy Sepulchre.</p> <p>1136-7 The Templars are established in the Amanus March, the frontier area north of Antioch in Syria (now Antakya, Turkey).</p> | <p>1137 Matilda of Boulogne, queen of England, niece of Godfrey de Bouillon and Baldwin of Edessa, gives the Templars extensive lands in Essex, England.</p> <p>1139 Pope Innocent II issues 'Omne datum optimum', a papal document or bull containing a set of religious privileges for the Templars that will enable them to operate more efficiently.</p> <p>1143 Count Ramon Berenguer IV of Barcelona, ruler of Aragon, reaches an agreement with the Templars whereby the Templars commit themselves to the war against the Muslims in Aragon in exchange for the gift of certain castles and lands.</p> <p>1144 Pope Celestine II issues 'Milites Templi', a papal bull containing a set of religious privileges for the Templars; followed by the bull 'Milites Dei', giving further privileges, issued by Pope Eugenius III a year later.</p> <p>1147-9 SECOND CRUSADE.</p> <p>1149-50 The strategic castle of Gaza in southern Palestine is given to the Templars.</p> <p>1153 The city of Ascalon (now Tell-Ashqelon, Israel) is captured by the Franks of the kingdom of Jerusalem.</p> <p>1163-9 King Amalric (Amaury) of Jerusalem invades Egypt.</p> <p>1177 Battle of Montgisard. Victory for King Baldwin IV of Jerusalem over Saladin, ruler of Egypt and Damascus.</p> <p>1179 Battle of Marj Ayun. Victory for Saladin. Saladin destroys the Templars' castle of Vadum Iacob in northern Galilee.</p> |
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- 1187 Battle of Hattin: Disaster for the crusader states; a victory for Saladin, who executes all his Templar and Hospitaller prisoners. Saladin captures Jerusalem, and the Templars lose their headquarters.
- 1189–92 **THIRD CRUSADE.**
- 1191 The Templars establish new headquarters at Acre (now Akko, Israel).
- 1191–1216 Intermittent war between the Templars and King Leon of Cilician Armenia over the Amanus March.
- 1204 The **FOURTH CRUSADE** captures Constantinople (now Istanbul, Turkey). The Templars are given some land in Greece.
- 1217–21 **FIFTH CRUSADE:** campaigns in Palestine and Egypt.
- 1218 The Templars and some crusaders build Castle Pilgrim (now 'Atlit in Israel), south of Acre.
- 1228–9 **CRUSADE OF FREDERICK II:** the emperor recovers part of Jerusalem by treaty, but not the Temple Mount where the Templars' original headquarters had been.
- 1229–30 King James I of Aragon captures the Muslim-held Balearic Islands; his forces include Templars.
- 1230 The Templars receive their first properties in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic).
- 1233 King James I of Aragon invades the Muslim kingdom of Valencia; his forces include Templars.
- 1237 The Templars are heavily defeated trying to recover their castle of Darbsak in the principality of Antioch from the Muslims of Aleppo (now Halep in Turkey).
- 1239–40 **CRUSADE OF THEOBALD OF CHAMPAGNE AND NAVARRE.**
- 1240–1 **CRUSADE OF EARL RICHARD OF CORNWALL.**
- 1240 The Templars begin to rebuild their castle of Safed in northern Galilee.
- 1241 The Mongols invade Hungary and Poland, defeating the Christian defensive forces, which include local Templars.
- 1244 Jerusalem falls to the Khwarezmian Turks. Battle of La Forbie; the Palestinian Franks are heavily defeated by Egyptian forces in alliance with the Khwarezmian Turks.
- 1248–54 **CRUSADE OF LOUIS IX OF FRANCE:** campaigns in Egypt and Palestine.
- 1250 Battle of al-Mansurah in Egypt: the crusaders are defeated and many Templars are killed.
- 1260 Battle of Ain Jalut: the Mongols are defeated by the Mamluks of Egypt.
- 1266 Sultan Baybars of Egypt captures the Templars' castle of Safed.
- 1268 Baybars captures Antioch.
- 1270 **LOUIS IX'S SECOND CRUSADE:** to Tunis.
- 1271–2 **CRUSADE OF THE LORD EDWARD OF ENGLAND.**
- 1274 Second Council of Lyons: discusses a new crusade, which never sets out.
- 1289 Sultan Qalawun of Egypt captures Tripoli (now Tarabalus in Syria).
- 1291 Acre is captured by al-Ashraf Khalil, son of Qalawun: the end of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. The Templars evacuate Castle Pilgrim, Sidon and Tortosa (now Tartus in Syria) and move their headquarters to Cyprus.
- 1302 The Templars lose Ruad (now Arwad) island, off Tortosa, to Sultan Al-Malik al-Nasir Mohammad of Egypt.
- 1306 King Henry II of Cyprus is ousted by his brother Amaury de Lusignan, lord of Tyre. The Templars support Amaury.
- 1307 The Templars in France are arrested on the orders of King Philip IV.
- 1310 King Henry II of Cyprus returns to power and puts the Templars on Cyprus under close arrest.
- 1311–12 Church council held at Vienne in France.
- 1312 Pope Clement IV abolishes the Order of the Temple in the bull 'Vox in excelsis'. He issues the bull 'Ad providam', transferring the Order's property to the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem (the Hospitallers).
- 1314 Two of the leading Templar officers, James of Molay the master of the Order, and Geoffrey of Charney, commander of Normandy, are burned at the stake at Paris.
- 1316/17 Ayme d'Oselier, marshal of the Temple, and other Templars on Cyprus die in prison with other leading opponents of King Henry II of Cyprus.
- 1319 The Order of Montesa is established in the kingdom of Valencia. The new Order receives the property of the former Order of the Temple and of the Order of the Hospital in Valencia. The Order of Christ is established in Portugal, with the property of the former Order of the Temple.



Aerial view of Jerusalem from the east in 1917, showing the walled city. The city's size had changed little since the sixteenth century when the walls were rebuilt by Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–66). In the foreground is the Temple platform (Haram al-Sharif) with the Dome of the Rock in the centre and the Aqsa mosque to the left. The Templars' buildings can be seen attached to the Aqsa mosque and to the east of the mosque; these were demolished in 1938–42 (Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Abt. IV: Kriegsarchiv. BS-Pal. 779: copyright Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv).



The Templars' castle of Monzón, Huesca, in the kingdom of Aragon. The Order received the castle from Count Ramon Berenguer IV of Barcelona as part of the settlement made between the Order and Ramon when he became ruler of Aragon. The young King James I of Aragon was brought up here until the age of nine, when he left to form his own court. The Templars of Monzón resisted a royal siege from the end of 1307 until 1 June 1309, at the time of the trial of the Templars in Aragon. The outer fortifications of the castle were reworked in the 17th and 18th centuries (Joan Fuguat Sans).

RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSION

There were many different sorts of people in the Order of the Temple. Because the Order's central function was to protect Catholic Christians, the most important members of the Order were the warriors. The higher-status warriors were knights, who had received this status in some sort of formal or semi-formal ceremony. When the Templars first began, in 1120, the concept of knighthood was still fluid and many knights were not of high social status. But by the time the Order was dissolved in 1312 knightly status had become socially important in the Christian West, and only brothers whose parents came from knightly families were allowed to enter the Order as knights.

Warriors who were not knights were called *servientes* in Latin or *sergents* in French, generally translated as 'sergeants' but literally meaning 'servants'. They supported the knights on the battlefield, but not all of them were warriors. The same term was applied to brothers of the Order who did not fight but who served the Order as craftsmen or labourers.

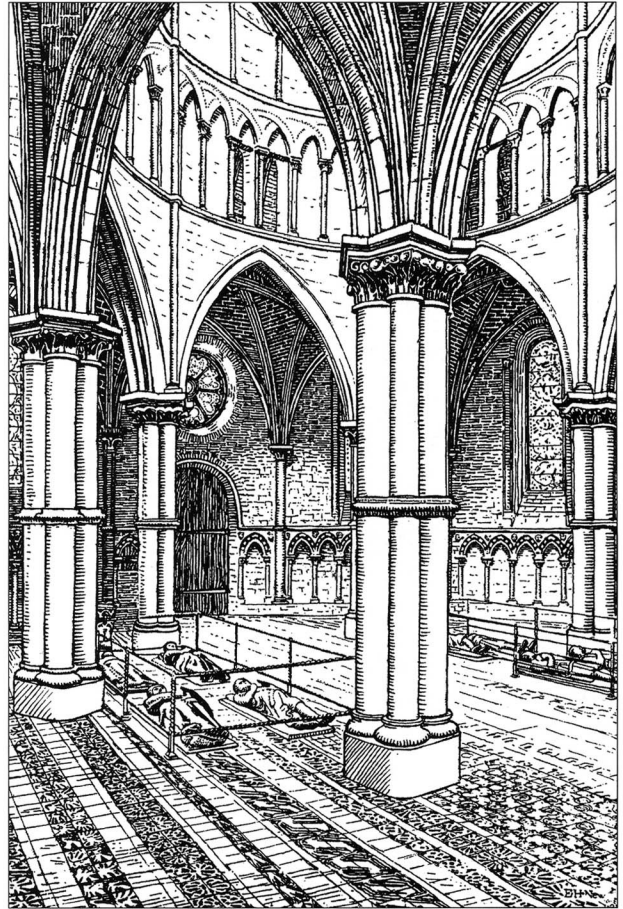
The Order also had priest-brothers, who served the spiritual needs of the members, hearing confessions, celebrating mass, and praying. In Europe there were also some sisters. There were one or two nunneries under the Order's supervision, as well as some women called 'sisters' living near to or in male houses of the Order, who had made religious vows and followed a religious lifestyle, but who were segregated from the brothers of the Order. The role of these sisters was to give spiritual support to the warriors by praying for the work of the Order. They were never expected to fight; they followed a lifestyle like that of traditional

nuns. In addition, there were various associate members, men and women, attached to the Order who made regular donations and possibly hoped to join the Order in the future, but had not taken full religious vows. This book concentrates on the warriors of the Order.

The vast majority of the Order's members joined as adults. The rule of the Order stated that children should not be received as members. Although some children were brought up within the Order's houses (for example, because their parents had died and entrusted their children to the Order's care) they were not obliged to join the Order when they grew up. The founders of the Order intended that only adult men who were able to fight should join the Order. Most men joined in their mid to late twenties, but a significant minority joined in their teens, and a few joined as early as ten years old. At the other end of the age spectrum, some joined as old men, after a career as warriors and administrators in secular society. They would not normally fight for the Order, but ended their days peacefully in one of the Order's houses in the West. It was also possible for men to join the Order for a short period as 'brothers for a term' and then return to their homes and families.

Every person who joined the Order had their own motives. It was rare for members to record exactly why they joined the Order, but sometimes it is possible to guess. The obvious and overwhelming reason for joining the Order was to help to protect the Christian holy places in Outremer. Christians believed that these were the places where Jesus Christ, the only son of God, had lived on Earth, had died and risen from the dead. So they believed it was essential that these sites be protected from non-Christians who, Christians believed, would defile them with their presence; and that Christian pilgrimage to them should be secure. As the Templars formed a religious Order, Latin Christians believed that service in the Order would wipe out sins and put a person right with God, so that on their death they could go straight to Heaven. In addition, death on the battlefield fighting the Muslims was martyrdom, and would win immediate entry to Heaven. As this was an era when life could be very short and uncertain, people in general were very anxious to ensure their wellbeing after death, even though they could do little to improve their circumstances in life. A glorious death on the battlefield, which would win them lasting fame, was better than an obscure death from sickness or starvation.

Many men who joined the Templars joined because they had been on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and seen the brothers fighting courageously against the Muslims, or because they had seen members of



The 12th century circular nave of New Temple church, London, showing the tombs of noble knights who were associate members of the Order. Many nobles supported the Order by becoming associate members, and were received as full members on their deathbed. They made the Order a large donation in their will and were buried within one of the Order's churches. The circular design of the nave of New Temple church was based on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. This late 19th century drawing, based on a photograph by J. Clerk, Q. C., shows the interior of Temple church before it was burnt out by incendiary bombs on the night of 10 May 1941 (T. Henry Baylis, *The Temple Church and Chapel of St. Ann: An Historical Record and Guide* (London: George Philip, 1893), frontispiece).

The Templars' commandery of Arville, Loir-et-Cher, France. Many Templars were admitted into the order in Western Europe, in the chapels of small local commanderies such as this one. They would then be sent wherever the Order needed them (Joan Fuguet Sans).



the Order travelling around Europe, preaching about the Order's work on the frontiers of Christendom and asking for charitable donations. But certain events could prompt a man to make the decision to join.

Some men joined the Order to escape a difficult situation at home, for example after the death of a much-loved wife. In the early 1130s a French knight named Guy Cornelly, from the region of Dijon, joined the Order because his wife had been struck down by leprosy. He entrusted his wife and daughters to the care of the abbot and monks of Dijon, giving them his land to support them, and then went to Jerusalem to fight in the service of God until the end of his life. Other warriors might join as an act of penance for their sins when they were in fear of death: one medieval account stated that Gerard de Ridefort, master of the Temple 1185–89, had joined the Order when he was very ill in Jerusalem.

Other motivations were more mundane. Warriors joined the Order for a worthwhile career, if they had no inheritance or other means of supporting themselves. Members of the Order had the opportunity to exercise authority and win promotion, so that men of relatively poor background and low status in society could win considerable power and influence. To outsiders, life in the Order seemed very comfortable: brothers were guaranteed clothing and regular meals, by contrast with the uncertain life of many warriors in the secular world. At the trial of the English Templars in 1309, Brother Hugh of Tadcaster said that he used to be employed as key keeper (*claviger*) by the Order, and had asked to be admitted to the Order. Some men were drawn to join the Order because members of their family were already in the Order; others might join because their employer joined the Order and they joined with him as comrades or as servants. It is also likely that some men joined because they wanted to travel and to see the holy places.

It was not to the Order's advantage to admit men who might change their minds when they had actually experienced life within the Order, and so the Order's Rule specifies that an applicant to join the Order should not be admitted immediately, but should wait for a time while the brothers assessed his motivation, and while he learned about the Order's Rule and

regulations. Then, if he was found suitable and still wished to join, he could be admitted. But because the Order frequently suffered heavy losses on the battlefields of Outremer, this regulation was soon abandoned, and applicants for membership who seemed suitable were admitted to full membership immediately.

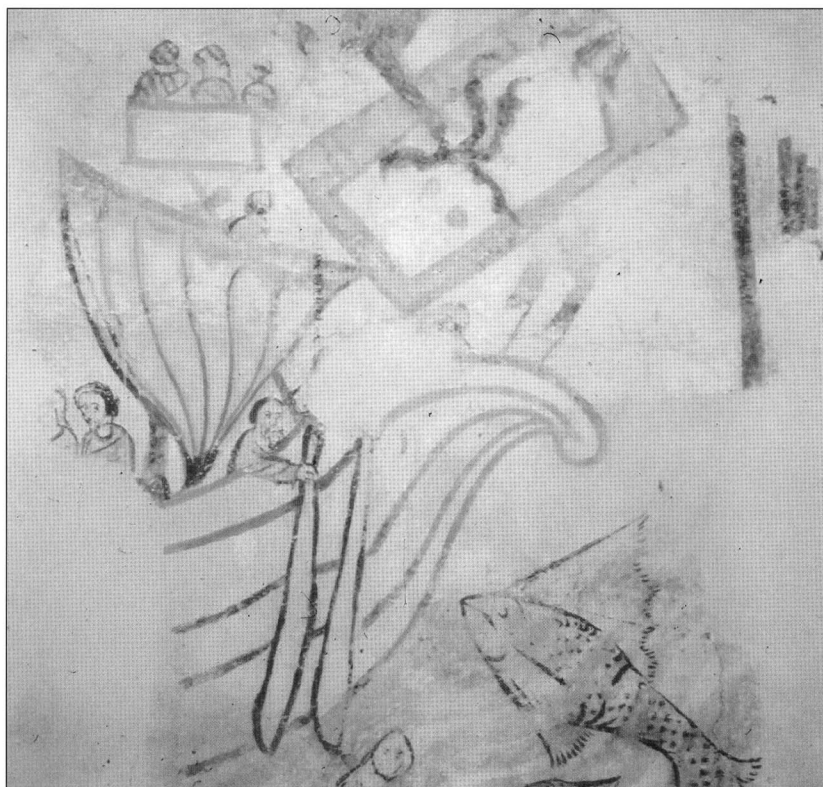
In the early years of the Order the brothers would not accept men who had been excommunicated – cut off from contact with the Christian Church because of their crimes – but outsiders saw the Order as a good place to reform criminal knights and actually encouraged them to join. Bernard, abbot of the great Cistercian abbey of Clairvaux in east-central France, who was a supporter of the early Templars, wrote in the 1130s that robbers, homicides and other criminals went to fight the Muslims in the Holy Land, and this was a double blessing: their neighbours were delighted to see them leave, and the Franks of the kingdom of Jerusalem were delighted to have their help. Law courts in the West sent condemned knights to the Holy Land to fight in defence of Jerusalem: for example, in 1224 Pope Honorius III told the master of the Temple to receive a knight, Bertran, who had killed a bishop, into the Order for seven years to do penance for his crime. The presence of such men in the Order, who had joined not because they had a religious vocation but as a punishment for serious crimes such as murder, must have made for a discipline problem. The lists of penances included in the ‘judgements’ and customs of the Order include examples of brothers fighting between themselves, killing Christian merchants or stealing from Christians. The punishments given for these crimes in the Order’s regulations – flogging and/or life imprisonment – seem severe, but were necessary in order to keep discipline.

Although it was against Church law to charge a fee for admission into a religious order, most religious orders expected applicants to make a financial contribution to their order when they joined. During the trial of the Templars, a few brothers said that they had paid a fee to join the Order of the Temple. This fee was a *passagium*, which was intended to pay the new member’s expenses on his journey to the Holy Land – a similar fee was paid by men who joined the Order of the Hospitallers. One brother in England, Roger of Dalton, said that he had paid sixty marks, the equivalent of forty pounds.



The fortified commandery of St Eulalie de Cernon, Aveyron, France; a local centre for recruitment of personnel and production of food to be sold or exported to the East. Like other religious houses in the locality, the commandery was fortified as protection for the Templars and their tenants against local lawlessness (Joan Fuguet Sans).

A ship depicted in the frescoes on the west wall of the Templars' church of San Bevignate, Perugia. The Templars needed ships to move personnel and supplies to the East, but the Order owned only a few ships of its own. The brothers preferred to hire ships as required (Francesco Tommasi).



There was a set ceremony laid down for the admission of brothers into the Order. This was included in manuscripts with the Order's Rule, statutes, customs and judgements, and was used by brothers responsible for receiving new members. At the trial of the Order of 1307–12 it was alleged that the admission ceremony always took place in secret and at night, but many brothers stated that the ceremony usually took place at or after dawn. This could be a time of convenience – before the many duties of the day began – or a symbolic time, symbolising entrance into a new life in the religious order. Some brothers said that no outsiders were present at the ceremony, but one English brother, Brother William Raven, stated that in addition to various Templars around a hundred outsiders were present when he was admitted. Admissions were generally conducted by the provincial commander and usually took place as part of a chapter meeting in the chapel of the local commandery. But any suitable room could be used: the English brother William of Scotho said that he was received in the dormitory.

Before the candidate for admission was brought into the chapter meeting, two or three of the older brothers talked to him about the regulations of the house, its work, its hardships and its discipline, to make sure that he was aware of what he was committing himself to. If he still wanted to join, they asked him if he had any commitments in the outside world: whether he were married, had promised to join a different religious order, whether he owed any money, whether he was physically fit; and they asked him to confirm that he was legally free. If he could confirm that no one had any claim on him, the admission could proceed.

The applicant for admission then came into the chapter meeting and formally requested to be admitted to the Order. The president of the meeting would explain to him that although to outsiders life in the Order appeared comfortable, he would have to obey orders, go where he did not want to go, and do what he did not want to do.

You only see the outer surface. On the surface you see that we have fine horses, beautiful equipment, drink and eat well and have fine robes, and it seems to you that you would have an easy life. But you do not know about the harsh commandments underneath the surface...

The examples of 'harsh commandments' would reflect the applicant's station in life: knights would be told that they would be sent to far-off countries, but not necessarily the ones they wanted to see (such as Armenia instead of Acre), while sergeants (servants) were told that they would be given low-status jobs such as looking after the pigs. The applicant was warned that the only good reason for joining the Order was to escape the sinful world, do God's work and do penance for his sins. He would have to be a slave of the Order.

If he was still happy to proceed, the applicant was sent out of the chapter meeting to pray, and the brothers discussed his case. If they were willing to receive him, he was brought back in and again cross-examined on whether he had any outside commitments which might allow outsiders to make a claim on him after he joined the Order. He was warned that if he was found to have lied he would be evicted from the Order.

If his answers were satisfactory, he was asked to promise to 'God and St Mary' (the Virgin Mary, mother of Christ), to obey the master of the Order, to live without sexual activity and without personal property, to keep the traditions and customs of the Order, help to conquer the 'holy land of Jerusalem', to never leave the Order except with the permission of the master and convent, and to never be 'in a place where a Christian could be wrongfully deprived of property'. When the applicant had promised all these things, the president of the meeting welcomed him into the Order and placed the Order's mantle on his shoulders, fastening the laces that held it on. At this point the applicant might also receive a woollen cord to tie around his waist as a symbol of chastity, and a soft cap in the style usually worn by religious men. The chaplain brother said a prayer, and the president and chaplain gave the new member the kiss of



The chapel of the Templars' commandery at Metz in Upper Lotharingia (or Lorraine) in the Rhineland. Templar commanderies usually had their own chapel, where the brothers could worship without disturbance from outsiders. Chapter meetings would be held in the chapel, as few houses had a separate chapter house. The chapel has an octagonal floor plan, possibly reflecting the design of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Alternatively, it may have imitated the palatine chapel built at Aachen for Emperor Charlemagne at the end of the ninth century. That building itself copied the church of San Vitale in Ravenna, built in the sixth century by Emperor Justinian to imitate Emperor Constantine I's ecclesiastical buildings in Constantinople (Jochen Burgtorf).

Not all those admitted to the Order were sent to the military front in the East. Many brothers were retained in the West to administer the Order's properties and accumulate the supplies needed to support the Order's operations in the East. These barns at the commandery of Temple Cressing in Essex, England, show the scale of the Templars' huge agricultural operation in Essex. They would have stored grain produced on the Templars' estates, that could either be sold locally or exported by ship to the East (Nigel Nicholson).



peace. While the new brother sat on the floor like a medieval pupil before his teacher, the president read out a summary of the rule and customs of the Order to him and told him to ask any questions that he might have. Finally he dismissed the new brother with a blessing.

After being received into the Order the new brothers did not necessarily stay in the commandery where they were received, but were sent where they were needed. Brother Roger of Dalton was received at the Templars' house at Balsall in Warwickshire in 1305 and then sent to Denney in Cambridgeshire, where he was put in charge of a 'grange', an outlying farm under the jurisdiction of the commander at Denney. In contrast, Brother Robert de la More, a knight received into the Order at Temple Dinsley in Hertfordshire in around 1304, was sent overseas to

Cyprus. Probably new brothers who were already trained warriors were sent straight to Outremer, while those who were experienced administrators were kept in Europe to manage the Order's estates.

Each brother was allowed to have one squire, to help look after his horses and equipment, and to assist him on the battlefield. Some squires

were employed by the Order, but some served in the Order unpaid as a religious service 'for charity' for a short period. Others were members of the Order who had been admitted as sergeant-brothers. The Order also employed mercenaries. The Order's regulations refer to *turcoples*, lightly armed cavalry employed by the Order and under the command of an official called the *turcopolier*. Mercenaries would be employed as the Order required them and were paid at the current rate they would expect from any employer.

Although the brothers often fought alongside crusaders, they were not themselves crusaders. Crusaders took temporary vows, but members of the military religious Orders took vows for life. Although if they could not settle in the Order they could ask their superiors to allow them to transfer to another religious Order, they were expected to move to a stricter religious order. Any brother who ran away from the Order would be pursued, brought back to the Order and punished as a deserter from Christ's cause.

BELIEF AND BELONGING

The Templars were all Catholic Christians, and followed the religious beliefs of their day, but because they were warriors rather than literary men, they wrote very little about themselves. To get an impression of their own beliefs we have to rely mainly on what other people wrote about them or for them. We can also consider the Templars' art – such as frescoes in their churches in Western Europe – and some of the evidence given during the trial of the Order, 1307–12. Because of the methods used during heresy trials at that time to ensure that the accused confessed to the accusations, the confessions made by the Templars in France would now be regarded as 'unsafe', and no modern court would accept them. However, information that they gave which was not a confession may be reliable, particularly when it is supported by other information from outside the Order.

This evidence shows that the Templars' beliefs were like those of the other knights in Western European society at the time: deeply held and straightforward. Although churchmen had traditionally doubted whether men who shed blood and killed others could please God and be admitted to Heaven, the warriors had no such doubts. Epic literature produced for reciting to warriors in the nobles' castles and halls depicts the role of the warrior in society as noble and glorious, and fighting as part of his duty to God. Indeed, fighting was depicted as being much more valuable to God than the monks' duty of praying, because warriors defended Christians and Christian territory and so, in a manner of speaking, protected God. According to this warrior viewpoint, when the crusaders captured Jerusalem and the holy places in the First Crusade they were recovering Christ's territory, as was their duty as Christ's warriors. The Templars' own Rule depicted the Order as a re-creation of knighthood, in which knights served God rather than their own interests: 'this religious order represents the flowering and resuscitation of the order of knighthood'. But in fact the knightly literature of the time indicates that many knights believed that they were already doing this; joining the Templars would be a way of taking a step yet further in virtue.



The Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ, was held in great respect and love by Catholic Christians in the Middle Ages. Mary and her son Jesus were regarded as patrons of many religious orders, including the Order of the Temple, and many of the Templars' churches were dedicated to Mary. New brothers made their vows to God and to Mary, and the brothers kept chastity in Mary's honour. This is the statue of the 'White Virgin Mary' and Christ Child in the Templars' church at their commandery of Villasirpa, at Palencia in Castile, Spain (Joan Fuguet Sans).

When the brothers joined the Order of the Temple they took vows to 'God and Our Lady Saint Mary', the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus. As medieval Christians believed that the Virgin Mary is queen of Heaven, they believed that, like queens on earth, she would intercede with the king (God) on behalf of his subjects. Outsiders gave donations to 'God, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Order of the Temple', and many of the Templars' churches were dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

Like other medieval Catholic Christians, the Templars also venerated other saints. St George was important, as (according to legend) he was a military man who also served God, and he had been tortured and killed by non-Christians for refusing to give up his Christian faith. The Templars could have looked to St George as an example of how they should live their lives, serving God as military men and refusing to give up their Christian faith even if they were captured and tortured by the Muslims. The Templars had a statue of St George in the chapel of their castle at Safed in Galilee, which was destroyed by the Muslims after they captured the castle in 1266.

An important focus for medieval Christians was holy relics – physical remains of the saints. These could be objects that had belonged to the saint or parts of the saint's body. All religious

orders collected holy relics, both as a focus for their own members' faith and also to inspire the faith of outsiders. The Templars also collected relics, such as (they claimed) the body of the great Greek saint Euphemia of Chalcedon.

The Templars would not have been very well educated, and would not have understood the complex theological debates that were then going on in the universities of Western Europe, but they knew some popular Bible stories. In England, in the third quarter of the 12th century, an anonymous cleric produced a translation of the Book of Judges in the Old Testament for the Templars to use. This tells how the children of Israel defended the Holy Land that they had captured with God's help. There is an obvious parallel between the situation described in the Book of Judges and the Templars in the Holy Land in the 12th century, defending the Holy Land that they believed the crusaders had captured with God's help. Some other religious works were translated for the use of the English Templars, including an account of the coming



end of the world. Medieval Christians believed that the world would end because of a figure called 'Antichrist', the opponent of Jesus Christ. Some Christian writers believed that Mohammad, the great prophet of Islam, was Antichrist. Some also believed that the crusades and the recapture of the holy places in the First Crusade were part of the 'End Times' and the coming of Christ's kingdom. But before Christ could return Antichrist and his forces, the Muslims, must be defeated. Therefore the Templars, champions of Christendom against the Muslims, were in the front line of the war against Antichrist and needed to be well informed on the subject. The poem about Antichrist warned them that they would be persecuted and face great dangers, and that they must stand firm in their faith and believe that if they were victorious they would be rewarded by Christ.

All of you, hear my advice! Be of great heart and undertake boldly to do good, and God will help you. If you deserve the highest place, He will give it to you. May God grant through His grace that we may be among the first, but if not, at least among the last. Amen.

We might expect the brothers to have produced their own history books to teach brothers about the history of the Order, to raise morale and encourage a community spirit within the Order, but they do not seem to have done so. Instead, some oral accounts of the Order's history and past glorious deeds circulated among the brothers. Friends of the Order told some anecdotes about the brothers' brave deeds, and during the trial of the Order some brothers referred to stories about the Order's beginnings. As the brothers were not well educated and were

The cult of St George was widespread in the medieval west. This 12th century tympanum from the parish church of St John the Baptist in Ruardean, Gloucestershire, is a particularly fine example of veneration for this warrior saint, who appears to be wearing early 12th century armour: a pointed helmet with nose guard, and a chain mail hauberk with broad panels to protect the legs. As they were drawn from a secular society that celebrated fighting for God, it is not surprising that the Templars also venerated St George (Nigel Nicholson).



Modern veneration of relics: the relics of the martyr St Euphemia in the Patriarchal Church of St George, Constantinople (Istanbul). The relics are housed in a 19th century silver casket covered in a white cloth decorated with red, as a symbol of martyrdom. To the left of the casket stands the icon of the saint. Behind the casket can be seen the magnificent iconostasis, dividing the nave of the church from the sanctuary, decorated with images of the Virgin Mary, Christ and the saints. Although this is a Greek Orthodox church rather than Catholic, the Templars' relics would have been similarly housed (J. M. Upton-Ward).

men of action rather than men of study, it would not really be surprising if they preferred to recite tales about the Order's history rather than read books about it.

Many of the stories told about the Templars indicate that the brothers believed that they were fighting for God, and that if they died in battle for God they would go straight to Heaven. In 1139 Pope Innocent II, setting out the religious privileges that the Order of the Temple would have (such as being able to build chapels and employ priests), wrote: 'Like true Israelites [an allusion to God's people in the Old Testament] and warriors most equipped for divine battles, truly on fire with the flame of Christian love, you fulfil in your deeds that gospel saying: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" – words echoed by many other popes after him. The martyr-saints venerated by the Templars, such as St George and St Euphemia, would have encouraged them to give up their lives in Christ's service. Outsiders, such as an anonymous pilgrim who was in the Holy Land sometime between 1167 and 1187, described the Templars riding fearlessly into battle and dying for Christ. Jacques de Vitry, bishop of Acre from 1216 to around 1228, told a story to encourage the Templars:

You should always be prepared to shed your blood for Christ, that is to say, to lay down your lives for God with desire and the sword, following the example of a certain knight of Christ who when he saw the great number of Saracens, began to speak out of his great faith and the joy of his heart, and to say to his horse: 'Oh Blackie, good comrade, I have done many good day's work by mounting

and riding on you; but this day's work will surpass all the others, for today you will carry me to eternal life.' After this, he killed many Saracens, and at last fell himself, crowned in battle with fortunate martyrdom.

It is difficult to know whether all Templars really did believe this. Probably not all were as determined as this, but stories like these and the saints that were held up as examples to the brothers indicate that they were encouraged to believe it.

There were several occasions when the Templars' readiness to advance into danger looked like rashness to other Christians, and while martyrdom might have been a good spiritual move, in terms of military strategy it could be disastrous. Sometimes the Templars and the other military religious orders opted for the strategic, cautious approach – and were then criticised by Western commentators who thought that they should have been bolder.

The leaders of the Order apparently also encouraged a particular image of the Order. They claimed that it was especially responsible for the defence of Christendom, and if the brothers had to abandon their posts, the whole of Christendom would be destroyed by their enemies. This would have made the Templars more confident in themselves, but would have made them appear arrogant to outsiders.

The Order's seals showed various symbols that were important to the Order, such as two knights on one horse, a domed building, and a lamb. In the Middle Ages, when most of the population could not read or write, a seal was fixed to official documents instead of a signature, as a visual and physical sign that the document had been approved. The symbols on the Order's seals reminded members of the Order of its purpose, as well as



ABOVE A fresco from the Templars' chapel at Metz, showing St Katherine of Alexandria, with the wheel on which she was tortured. As a Christian who suffered torture and death at the hands of non-Christians rather than give up her faith, St Katherine was widely venerated by Catholic Christians during the middle ages. The Templars, who might well be captured in battle and tortured by Muslims, could look to Katherine's example to encourage them to hold firmly to their faith throughout every danger (Jochen Burgtorf).



LEFT Tempelberg church, near Lebus in north-eastern Germany. Bishop Henry of Lebus donated the tithe, or tenth of produce, from this church's lands to the Templars in 1244. The fabric of the church dates mainly from the 13th century, though it was rebuilt in later times (Jürgen Sarnowsky).

Medieval religious artists loved symbolism and word play. A common example was the use of the symbol of a lamb with a cross to represent Jesus Christ, the *agnus Dei* (lamb of God).

TOP RIGHT This fine example, showing the lamb lying down with two lions (a biblical allusion?), is from an 11th century tympanum from the parish church of St Mary, Upleadon, in Gloucestershire, England (Nigel Nicholson).



BOTTOM RIGHT The seal of Richard of Hastings, master of the Temple in England, 1160–85, also shows the *agnus Dei*. All who saw the seal would realise that it represented the Templars' service for Christ (BL Harl. Ch. 86 C. 63: by permission of the British Library).



advertising the Order's work to outsiders who had business with the Order, or saw the Order's seal in the course of their work. The problem with such symbols is that they have to be interpreted, and outsiders were not always sure what the symbols meant. The lamb was obviously 'the lamb of God', Jesus Christ, to whose service the Order was dedicated. The dome would have represented the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the central shrine of Christendom where the first brothers of the Order had originally met and which the Order protected. But outsiders were not sure



what the two knights on one horse represented: one contemporary wrote that it was a reminder that when the Order began it was so poor that the brothers could only afford one horse between two; another wrote that it represented the charity of the Order: one knight had rescued another whose horse had been killed in battle. The former seems more likely.

In their day-to-day lives, the Templars' distinctive habit, with the red cross on the left breast of the mantle, would have encouraged a feeling of identity among members of the Order. The surviving frescoes in their chapels in the West sometimes show scenes of warfare in the Holy Land, which would have reminded the brothers of the true function of their Order. Some of the Order's churches and chapels were built with a circular nave, a visual image of the circular central part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre that would remind the brothers and outsiders of the Order's work in the Holy Land. Other military religious Orders and returning pilgrims and crusaders also built churches with circular naves as a symbol of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Templars' weekly chapter meetings in houses with four or more brothers would have fostered a sense of community, while the provincial and general chapter meetings enabled the leaders of the Order to keep the different parts of the Order in touch with each other. In the 13th century an official was appointed with overall command of the houses in the West, presumably to improve administrative efficiency; in the middle of the century this responsibility was divided between two 'visitors', who were to go around the Western houses, checking their procedures and practises. This would have encouraged the brothers in individual houses to see themselves as members of a larger organisation.

The fact that brothers travelled between Outremer and the West should have encouraged a feeling of identity throughout the Order. In fact, by the early 14th century it seems that only a small proportion of the brothers ever actually went to Outremer, and some witnesses in the trial of the Order actually thought that brothers were sent to Outremer as a punishment, rather than to carry out the central purpose of the

ABOVE LEFT Images produced by the Order: the lead seal of Brother Bertrand de Blancafart, master of the Temple, from a charter of 27 April 1168, showing two knights on one horse. Although its meaning was unclear, this was the best known image of the Order (see page 28). Outsiders variously believed that the image symbolised the poverty of the Order in its early days, or the brothers' charity in helping other knights on the battlefield (Staatsarchiv Amberg, Kloster Waldsassen U 7/1; copyright Staatsarchiv Amberg).

ABOVE RIGHT Reverse side of the same seal, showing the cupola of the dome of the church of the Holy Sepulchre. This image was important for the Order because it had originally been set up by knights who had been lay members of the religious community at that church, and its overriding purpose was to protect the church of the Holy Sepulchre as the central shrine of the Christian faith (Staatsarchiv Amberg, Kloster Waldsassen U 7/1; copyright Staatsarchiv Amberg).

Order. As communications were slow and erratic, it must have been difficult for the leaders of the Order in Outremer to keep the brothers in the West accurately informed of military policy. In the Iberian Peninsula, where the brothers helped to push forward another frontier with the Muslims, and in Eastern Europe, where there were other non-Christians threatening Christian territory and where the Templars were often introduced simply to bring in colonists and cultivate unused land, the local Templars must have found it difficult to remember at times that their original vocation had centred on the far-off Holy Land.

TRAINING

The Templars' Rule, statutes and customs do not give any specific instructions about training. There are references to the master giving permission to the brothers to race horses or joust. The regulations warned brothers that when they jousted they should not throw their lances, because of the risk of injury. They were not allowed to hunt – traditionally a way of practising horsemanship – partly because it was a secular pastime and partly because of the risk of serious injury. The Order's regulations also refer to brothers riding out for pleasure, but the brothers' daily timetable, which was based on the monastic daily timetable first drawn up by St Benedict of Nursia for his abbey at Monte Cassino in Italy in the sixth century, makes no mention of military training. Presumably the brothers were supposed to fit their military training into any part of the day when

they were not occupied praying in chapel or attending a chapter meeting: for example, during the morning between the services of tierce and sext (at 9.00 am and midday respectively) or in the afternoon after the service of none at 3.00 pm and before dusk.

This absence of organised training was the custom in the medieval West. It was not usual in the 12th and 13th centuries for commanders-in-chief in Western Europe to oversee the training of their troops; it was the individual's responsibility to organise his own training. The Templars' regulations assume that brothers who entered the order as knights or as fighting sergeants would already be trained warriors, who would be practised in the use of the couched lance from horseback and in fighting with a sword from horseback and on foot, and who would have experienced military action in Europe before coming to

The Templars' day, as laid down in the Order's statutes. The brothers' daily routine was based on the monastic rule devised by the Italian abbot Benedict of Monte Cassino in the sixth century. As the daily routine did not mention military duties, the timetable had to be adapted as required to include military activity (the author).

The Templars' Day
according to the Rule of the Temple

Time	Service in Chapel (if house has one, otherwise hall)	
At night	Matins in chapel	Brothers to join in prayers. Brothers then go and check horses and equipment and speak to their squires. Sleep until dawn.
c. 6am	Prime Mass (or after sext)	
c. 9am	Terce	
c. 12 noon	Sext Mass (if not heard earlier)	Afterwards repair armour and equipment, make tent pegs, tent posts, or anything necessary. Followed by lunch: knights eat at first sitting; sergeants at second sitting; clerk to read aloud while they eat. Go to chapel and give thanks: 'Go to their posts and do the best that God instructs them'.
c. 3pm	Nones Vespers for the dead Vigils for the dead	
Dusk	Vespers Compline	Followed by supper. Followed by a drink. Check horses and equipment, speak to squire if necessary.
Dark		Bed.



the Holy Land to fight for the Order. The regulations imply that, as active warriors, the brothers would be eager to race their horses and joust, and that the master's responsibility was not to initiate such exercises but to regulate them so that they did not damage themselves or their horses.

The Templars' regulations also refer to their using crossbows, which could be fired from horseback or on foot. The Templars would have learned how to use these weapons before they joined the Order. Again, if they were to use them effectively in military action they would have had to practise in peacetime, but the Order's regulations say nothing about arrangements for such practise, only that the brothers used to bet 'on the draw of a crossbow'. Perhaps they were shooting at targets and betting on the outcome. The regulations tried to limit what they could wager, rather than forbidding them to bet altogether, implying that an outright ban would have been impossible to enforce.

The statutes of the Order do set out how the brothers were to march together and engage in battle, but do not state that the brothers should practise this before going into battle. Contemporary writers record the Templar warriors charging all together in a tightly packed *eschielle*, or squadron, against Muslim battle lines, breaking through them and scattering the Muslim forces to right and left, enabling the other Christian forces to follow them into the midst of the enemy. Conducting a charge in this manner, with horses close together, moving at the same speed and with precision, would require considerable practise. The fact that contemporaries commented on the Templars' charge, and that the Muslims feared their charge so much, indicates that they were well practised at it. Western knights were not renowned for charging in a tightly knit wedge and in a disciplined manner, so it seems more likely that this skill was learned after brother knights had joined the Order. Would repeated battle experience be sufficient to learn this manoeuvre,

A 12th century fresco from the Templars' chapel at Cressac-sur-Charente, France, showing a single knight charging on horseback with couched lance. Although the literature of the time took the skill for granted, effective handling of the lance on horseback in battle required daily practise (Picture: M. Debès. Hurault phot., reproduced from *La Peinture murale en France: le haut moyen âge et l'époque romane*, by Paul Deschamps and Marc Thibout: Collection Arts et Historia, Éditions d'histoire et d'art, Librairie Plon, Paris 1951, p. 137, plate LXVII (1)).

or would the brothers be practising their tightly disciplined charge along with their racing of horses and jousting, with the master's permission? The latter was more likely, but we do not know for sure.

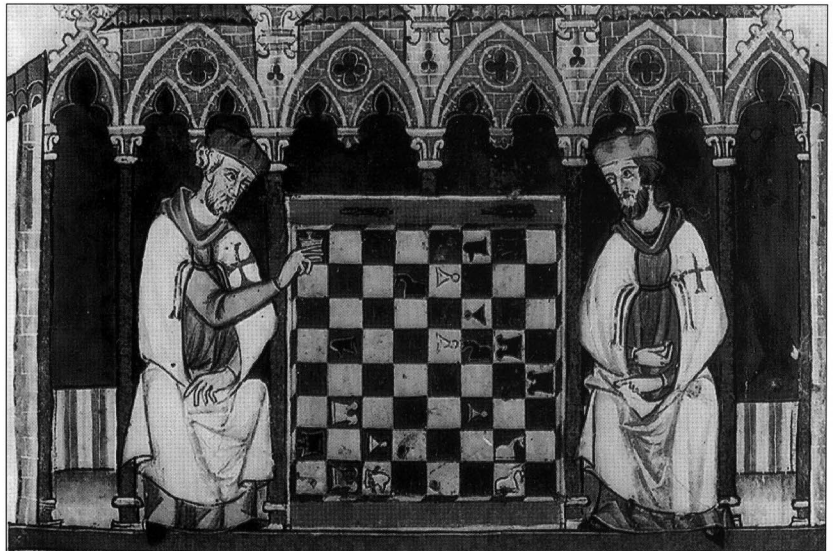
The Templars' leading members were knights, whose typical mode of fighting was on horseback and their typical weapons the sword and the lance. The Order's statutes refer only to mounted warriors in battle situations, implying that foot soldiers were of little importance to the Order. Those sergeant brothers that were not armed could fight if they wished (presumably on foot), but no instructions were given for them in the statutes. The statutes state that the commanders could buy Turkish arms (presumably lighter than Frankish arms) to give to the craftsmen sergeant brothers, which indicates that the ordinary sergeant brothers could be expected to fight. But the statutes do not explain what their role would be.

A great deal of the Order's military activity consisted of fast-moving raids across enemy territory, in which mounted warriors had the advantage of speed and manoeuvrability: foot soldiers would have slowed down the raiding force. So it is possible that the Order made relatively little use of foot soldiers on the battlefield, instead choosing to mount its support troops as light cavalry and mounted archers.

APPEARANCE AND EQUIPMENT

The Order's Rule of 1129 set out how the Brothers should dress when not on military duty. The emphasis was on practicality and simplicity. An official called the *drappier*, or draper, was responsible for ensuring that the brothers in the East were issued with the necessary clothes. 13th century manuscript illustrations show that the brothers' basic peacetime dress was similar to that of monks. They wore a long tunic of dark cloth or *cappa*, belted at the waist and reaching to their ankles, with tight-fitting sleeves. Some pictures show the tunic having a hood of the same dark cloth. On their heads they wore the dark-coloured soft cap that was typical of religious men in the period. They wore ordinary shoes

Two bearded Templars playing chess, showing their dark woollen monastic-style tunics, soft religious-style hats and white woollen mantles, and the red cross on the left breast of the mantle. This image, from a manuscript of King Alfonso X of Castile's *Libro de Ajedrez, dados y tables*, shows the Templars as courtiers rather than as warriors. Templars in commanderies or on the frontier of Christendom would not normally have the leisure for board games. The Order's regulations specified that they should not play chess or backgammon, and they were not allowed to gamble (Biblioteca del Monasterio de El Escorial, MS. T. I 6, fol. 25: copyright: Patrimonio Nacional, Spain).

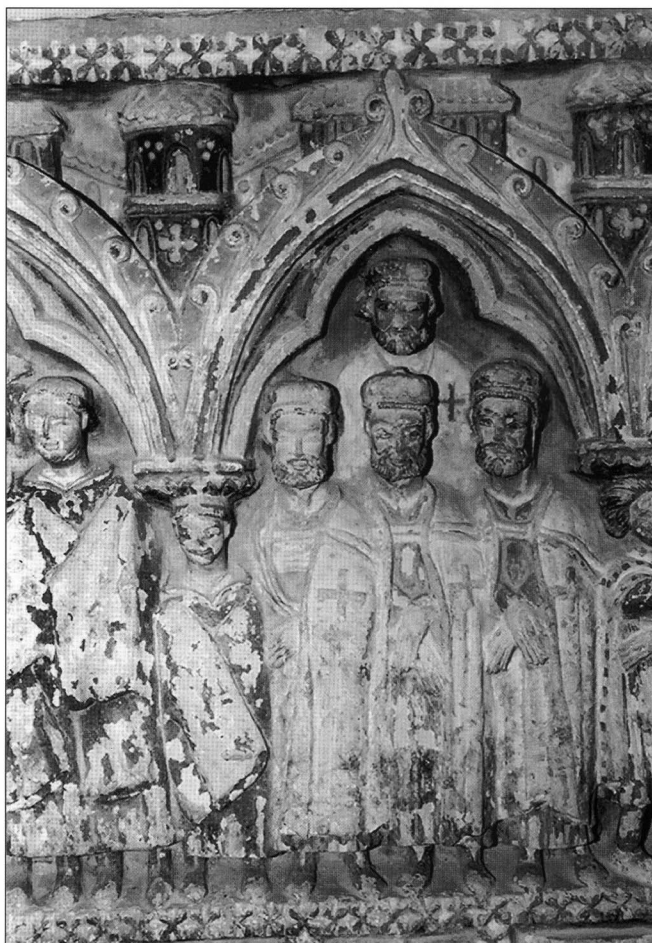


on their feet, without any decoration or fashionable designs. A particular distinguishing mark of all male members of the order was that they wore a beard and kept their hair respectably short, although this was long by early 21st century standards, covering their ears.

Over the long tunic the brothers wore a mantle, a light-weight cloak, also called 'the habit' as it was the distinguishing dress of brothers of the Order. Knights wore a white mantle, symbolising purity. The sergeants wore a mantle of black or brown cloth. Because, as he and they believed, the brothers fought and died in the service of God and to protect other Christians, Pope Eugenius III (1145–53) allowed them to wear a red cross on the left breast of their mantles, symbolising martyrdom. They were not allowed to add fancy decorations to their mantles, but they were allowed to have their winter mantle lined with sheep's skin for extra warmth.

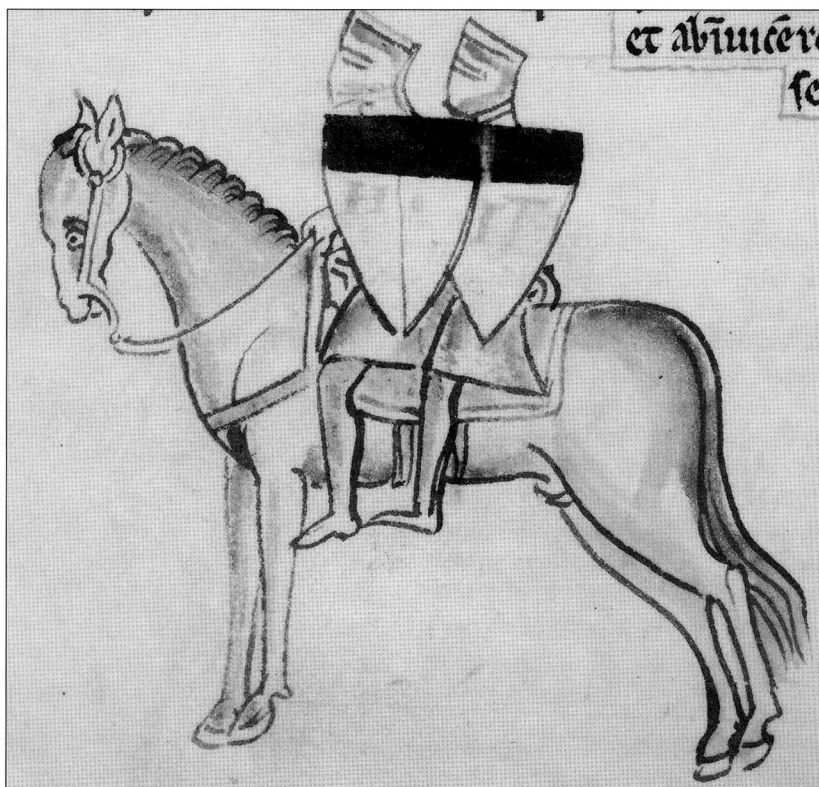
Under their tunics, the brothers wore a shirt, which was normally of wool, but they were allowed to wear linen in summer because of the heat of the Middle East. Over this shirt, around their waists, they wore a simple belt made of a woollen cord, which symbolised chastity. They also wore breeches of woollen cloth, and woollen leggings or *chausses* (now called 'hose') on their legs. At night they were expected to sleep in their shirts, breeches, belts and shoes. Undressing completely would be a form of self-indulgence, a giving-in to physical comfort that was not appropriate for either religious men or for disciplined warriors. Religious men were not to pamper themselves, and warriors had to be ready to get up and fight at any moment of the day or night.

The Order's hierarchical statutes, dating from before the loss of Jerusalem in 1187 and perhaps from around 1165, list the armour that was to be issued to the knight-brothers. Under their armour they wore a padded jerkin or *haubergeon*, which itself acted as an additional layer of protection against enemy blows. Over this they wore a hauberk, which was a long-sleeved shirt of chain mail with chain mail to cover the hands and with a chain mail hood or *coif*, iron *chausses* (chain mail leggings). Over their hauberk the knights wore a white surcoat, which kept the hot sun off their metal armour and allowed them to display the symbols of the Order, to distinguish them from other troops on the field of battle. In 1240 Pope Gregory IX wrote that the knights used to wear white *capae* or *cappae*, monastic-style tunics, over their armour, so this 'surcoat' was probably a *cappa*. Wearing a monastic tunic over their armour would enable the brothers to recognise each other on the battlefield and



A group of Templars on the tomb of Don Felipe in the Templar church at the commandery of Villasirpa (Palencia). The carving clearly shows their characteristic beards, religious-style soft, dark-coloured hats, long dark tunics and white mantles with the red cross on the left breast. They appear here as part of a noble household, surrounded by other members of Don Felipe's entourage. The presence of Templars in many noble and royal households was a testament to their reputation for piety, integrity and efficient financial management (Joan Fugueta Sans).

An outsider's view of the Order: two Templars on one horse, fully armed and showing the Order's black and white shield, with a black section above and white beneath. This drawing, based on the image on the Order's seal (see page 23), appears in the *Chronica majora* or 'Greater Chronicle' of Matthew Paris, chronicler of the abbey of St Albans in England. It represents the most common outsiders' view of the Order: religious warriors united in the service of Christ (Corpus Christi College 26, p. 220: copyright: the master and fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).



distinguish them from other warriors, but it did restrict their movements.

On their head, over the *coif*, the knight-brothers wore a *helm* or helmet – in the 1160s this would have been open-faced, but 13th century manuscript illustrations and the fresco in the Templars' church of San Bevignate in Perugia, dating from the 1240s, show the Templars wearing fully enclosed helmets. Alternatively, they could have a *chapeau de fer*, or kettle-hat, a conical iron helmet with a wide brim to deflect enemy blows. Their feet were covered with chain mail. As with their 'peacetime' clothes, the Templars' armour was to be plain, without the gilding and decoration with jewels and precious metals that was common in this period. Unlike secular knights, they had vowed to give up personal wealth, and they were not fighting for their own honour but for the honour of God and their Order.

Their weapons were the standard weapons of western knights in the period. They would carry a sword, the long broadsword of the period, and a shield. The fresco in the church of San Bevignate shows one Templar carrying a triangular shield, with the Order's white and black arms and a black cross (rather than the Order's usual red cross). Twelfth century frescoes in the Templars' church at Cressac-sur-Charente in France show warriors riding out to fight wearing white surcoats over their armour with crosses on the breast and carrying kite-shaped shields. Because the shields show various different designs it is not certain that these are all Templars, although the crosses on their white surcoats suggest that they may be. The brothers were also issued with a lance, three knives of different lengths (a dagger, a bread knife and a small knife) and a 'Turkish' mace. The lance, made from wood – ash wood was

preferred, as it is both strong and flexible – varied in thickness and in length, but an average cavalry lance would be around four metres long (13 feet). The Order's regulations also refer to the brothers having crossbows and 'Turkish' arms other than maces, which had been captured in battle or purchased locally. As the Turks were fast-moving, lightly armed horsemen, presumably these were lighter weapons than their western counterparts.

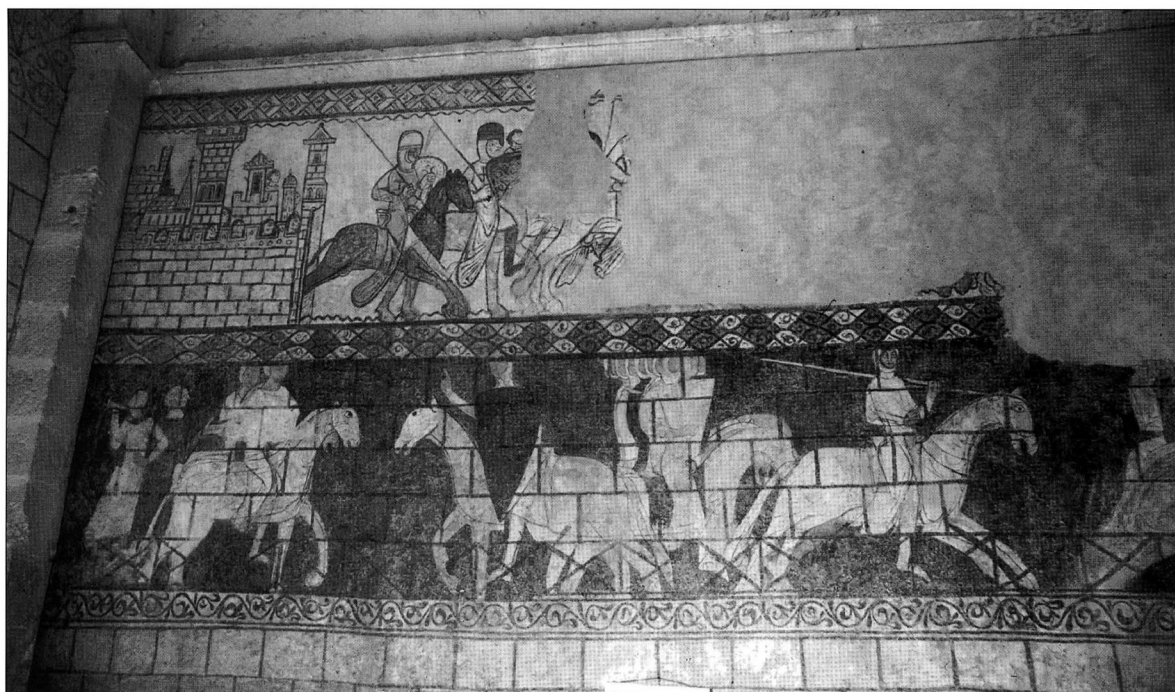
The Order's regulations contain no details about the crossbows that the order generally used. We might guess that the brothers preferred to use the best weapons available, and that therefore by the late 12th century they would be using composite horn bows rather than wooden bows, as the former were lighter and smaller than the latter. The advantage of a crossbow over a simple bow was that it could be used effectively by a comparative novice and was much more powerful than the simple bow. In a siege situation, or where a large group of crossbowmen were operating together on a battlefield, the crossbow could be devastating, for it could pierce chain mail. But drawing back the string of a crossbow, locking it in place with a 'trigger' and placing the arrow or bolt in position, ready to shoot (the process was called 'spanning') was more difficult and time-consuming than drawing a simple bow. In the 12th and 13th centuries as crossbows became stronger, new and more effective methods of spanning them were developed: the crossbow was given a 'stirrup' into which the user could place one foot, while the bow string was held on a hook suspended from a belt around the user's waist. To span the bow, the user gripped the hook and pulled while pressing down with the foot in the stirrup. It is reasonable to assume that the knight-brothers and sergeant-brothers would operate crossbows in siege situations or when they had to fight on foot.

The Order's later regulations say nothing about the Templars' battlefield 'uniform', but in around 1240 Pope Gregory IX wrote to the Templars on the subject. Although the pope was no warrior himself, as God's representative on Earth (as the Latin Christians believed) he was responsible for the well-being of the Order, which was dedicated to God's service. He also had the authority to approve changes to the Order's regulations and customs, which included the armour that they wore in battle. In place of the *cappa*, which impeded their hands and arms and made them more vulnerable to their enemies, the pope allowed the brothers to wear a large supertunic over their armour, with a cross on the breast. It is not clear what this looked like, as the contemporary fresco in the Templars' church of San Bevignate shows the Templars without any coverings on their armour, but it was probably a sleeveless surcoat.

According to the Order's statutes, the armour of armed sergeant-brothers covered less of the body than that of the knights. Presumably they were given a padded jerkin to wear under their armour. Their chain mail shirt had no sleeves, their chain mail leggings had no



The Templars' view of themselves: this bearded Templar appears in the mid 13th century fresco on the west wall of the Templars' church of San Bevignate, Perugia, Italy. He is armed for battle, wearing a chain mail shirt and a broad-brimmed kettle-hat rather than a fully enclosed helmet. His shield and hat carry a version of the Order's arms different from that found in the contemporary drawings by the English monk Matthew Paris (see opposite page): black below, white above, with a black cross on the white section. Possibly this represents the Master's arms, while the arms drawn by Matthew Paris were those of the Order as a whole. The kettle-hat would have offered less protection than a fully enclosed helmet; it would have been cooler in the hot conditions of the Middle East, yet this Templar wears no covering over his armour, which would have become very warm in the sun (Francesco Tommasi).



Frescoes from the Templars' church at Cressac-sur-Charente in France, showing fighting men. Those on the upper level date from the 12th century. They have crosses on their surcoats and may be Templars, although their shields do not carry the Templars' black and white arms but show various designs. Those on the lower level date from the 13th century and do not appear to be Templars, but show knights riding together in a tightly massed group as the Templars would have done (David Nicolle).

foot coverings (so that they could walk more easily, and therefore fight on foot), and they wore a kettle-hat rather than a full helmet. They wore black surcoats, with a red cross on the front and the back. Their weapons were apparently similar to those of the knight-brothers, but as they were under the command of the turcopolier on the battlefield – who also commanded the lightly armed mercenary troops called *turcoples* – they were presumably more lightly armoured than the knight-brothers, and would have ridden lighter horses.

The most important piece of equipment for a knight was his warhorse. Even though he might dismount to fight, the warhorse gave him status, speed, manoeuvrability, and extra height in battle. The Templars' rule and statutes laid down how many horses each brother was allowed to have; ideally a knight required more than one warhorse, in case his first was killed in battle, and he would also require a riding horse and pack horses. The knight-brother could have up to four horses: two warhorses (*destriers*), a riding horse (*palfroi*) or mule and a packhorse (*roncin*). He had at least one squire to assist him. The sergeant-brothers had one horse each and no squire, but sergeant-brothers holding military commands such as the under-marshal and the standard-bearer could have two horses and one squire to assist them.

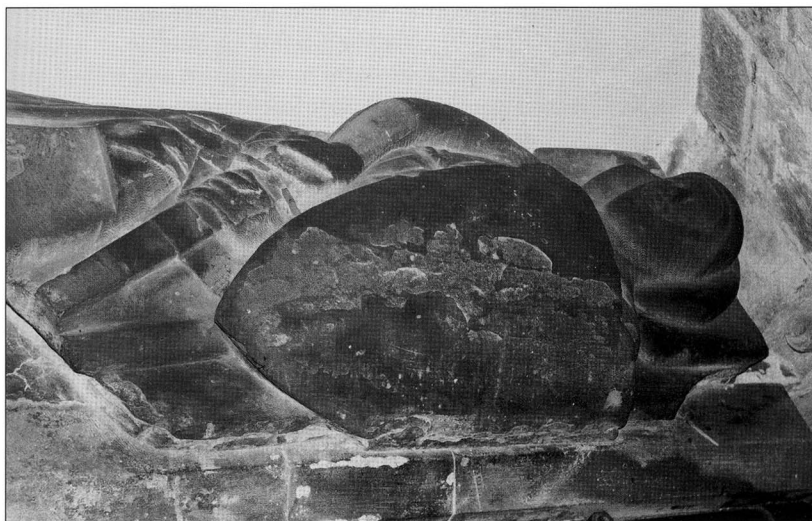
A riding horse could be a gelding or a mare, but a warhorse had to be a stallion. The fictional literature of the 12th to 15th centuries suggests that medieval war-horses could be very tall, but the evidence of archaeology and medieval art indicates that in fact horses were not over 15 hands high (5 feet to the shoulder), so that the knight would have stood shoulder to shoulder with his warhorse.

The horses' equipment, like the brothers' armour, was to be plain and undecorated, and the brothers were not allowed to adapt it to their

own preference (for example, shortening the stirrup leathers) without permission. The Order's 12th-century statutes refer to the horses' bridles, saddles and girths, stirrups and horse blankets. Each brother and each squire was allowed one saddlebag, in which to carry their drinking cups, flasks, bowl and spoon and other personal equipment, as well as a leather or wire mesh bag for carrying chain mail shirts. There is no reference to armour for the horses; this did not become common in any case until the late 12th century. The Templars' horses in the San Bevignate fresco, dating from the 1240s, have horse-coverings with the brothers' arms – black and white with red and black crosses – but they do not seem to be wearing metal horse armour. This would make them more vulnerable to enemy weapons, but also quicker on their feet than horses weighed down by metal armour. When the Templars were arrested in Cyprus in 1308 and an inventory was made of their armour and weapons, the Order had armour for both men and horses.

The marshal of the Order had control over all the weapons and armour of the Order. All gifts, bequests and booty of this type were to be handed over to the marshal. Although much of the Order's equipment must have come from gifts and from booty, the Order also had workshops where equipment could be made. Brothers were not allowed to take things from these workshops without permission. The marshal also controlled the horses. The horses used by the Order in the East would usually have been the heavier western European warhorses rather than the lighter horses used by the Muslims. When horses arrived from the West the marshal had to inspect them, and he was responsible for allocating horses where they were needed. Brothers were not allowed to request a particular animal, but they could return a horse that was unsuitable. The fact that the Order's statutes specify that the marshal could buy male and female horses suggests that the Order also bred its own horses, but whereas the Teutonic Order had organised stud farms there are only passing references in the Templars' statutes to putting horses to stud.

The brothers were responsible for the care of their own horses and weapons. They were not to exhaust their horses, and were to ensure that they were properly fed. They were not to try out their swords by hitting



This knight depicted on his tomb in the parish church of St Mary the Virgin in Bishop's Frome, Herefordshire, is believed locally to have been a Templar. In fact there is nothing in the effigy to support this theory. However, his armour is typical of the late 13th century European knight, with the triangular shield and the long sword hanging from a leather sword belt around his hips, and this is the sort of armour that Templars of his day would have worn (Nigel Nicholson).

them against a hard object, such as an anvil, in case they broke, and they should not throw their equipment about, as it might be damaged or lost. If they lost a weapon they would be punished: section 157 of the Catalan version of the Order's Rule and judgements tells how one Brother Marlí, who lost a sword and a bow through carelessness, was expelled from the Order. Similarly, a brother who killed, lost or wounded a horse or mule was in danger of being expelled from the Order 'at the brothers' discretion' (section 596 of the Rule). Although the Order had vast possessions in land, its expenses in equipment and personnel were very high, and it could not afford to lose money through carelessness and irresponsibility.

LIVING CONDITIONS: ON CAMPAIGN

In the peaceful West and away from the frontier with the Muslims, the Templars lived in houses very similar to contemporary manor houses, including various agricultural buildings, a hall, a dormitory where the brothers slept, lodgings for travellers who were passing by and perhaps a chapel. These houses were not enclosed like traditional monasteries, because the brothers had to come and go, overseeing their farms and other businesses, collecting rents, and charitable donations for their work in the East. Brother Roger of Dalton spent his whole career in the Order administering a 'grange' attached to the Order's commandery of Denney in Cambridgeshire, England, and never attended any of the Order's official meetings. After the Order of the Temple was dissolved in 1312 he went to a monastery in the diocese of Ely. He then worked as an administrator for the Hospitallers, looking after their house at Ashley in Cambridgeshire, where he was still working 26 years later.

On the frontier and in areas without a strong authority to keep law and order, the Templars lived in fortified buildings. Their castle at Vrána in Croatia is an example. On the frontiers with the Muslims they were given castles to garrison, such as the castles of Gardeny, Miravet and Monzón in the Iberian Peninsula and in Outremer Baghras, to the north of Antioch, and Safed in Galilee. They also built their own fortresses, such as Castle Pilgrim ('Atlit) to the south of Haifa in the kingdom of Jerusalem. These fortresses would enclose the brothers' living quarters and chapel, so that they could carry on their religious lifestyle, but would also include military buildings such as stores for weapons and workshops. The fortresses would also require lodgings for mercenary troops and other warriors who were assisting the Order but who were not members. So that the brothers could carry on with their daily religious timetable without distraction, the living quarters would have to be arranged so that the Templars were segregated from the other warriors within the castle. The concentric castle design which the military religious orders and the Franks in Outremer began to use from the mid 12th century onwards suited the Templars well because it allowed them to have their own religious buildings in the central part of the castle, cut off from the rest of the garrison, who could be housed in an outer ward.

For the most part detailed figures for personnel in these castles have not survived, but in the 1260s a supporter of the Templars wrote a description of the Templars' rebuilding of their castle of Safed, which

(continued on page 41)

A: Knight Templar of around 1170



B



B. An admission ceremony in the 1280s

C. The equipment carried by Templars, according to the Order's statutes recorded in 1165



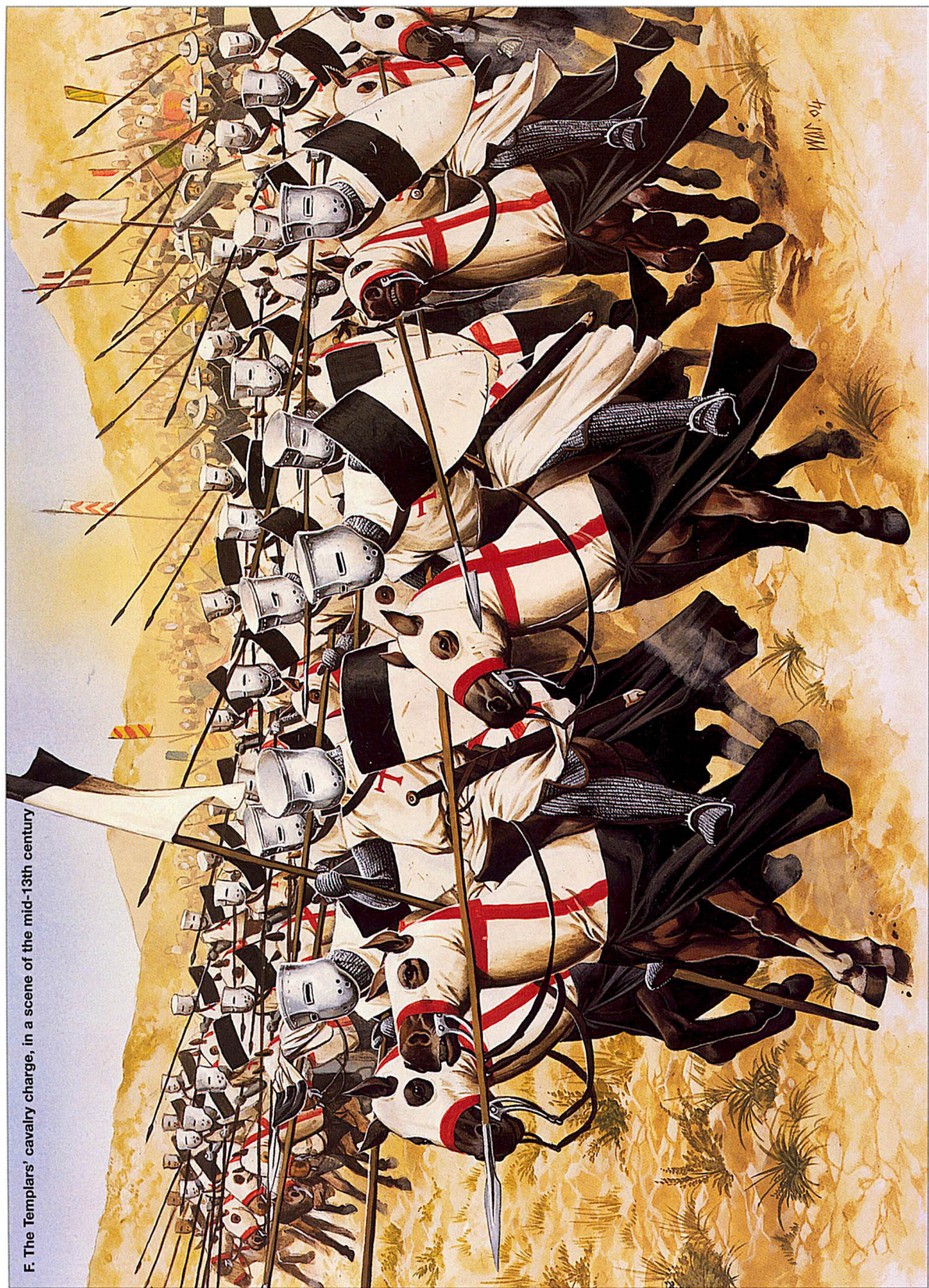
D. A scene from the 1230s, outside a small Templar fortress in Outremer





E. Camp scene: depicting a Templar expedition into Muslim-held territory during the 1240s

F. The Templars' cavalry charge, in a scene of the mid-13th century

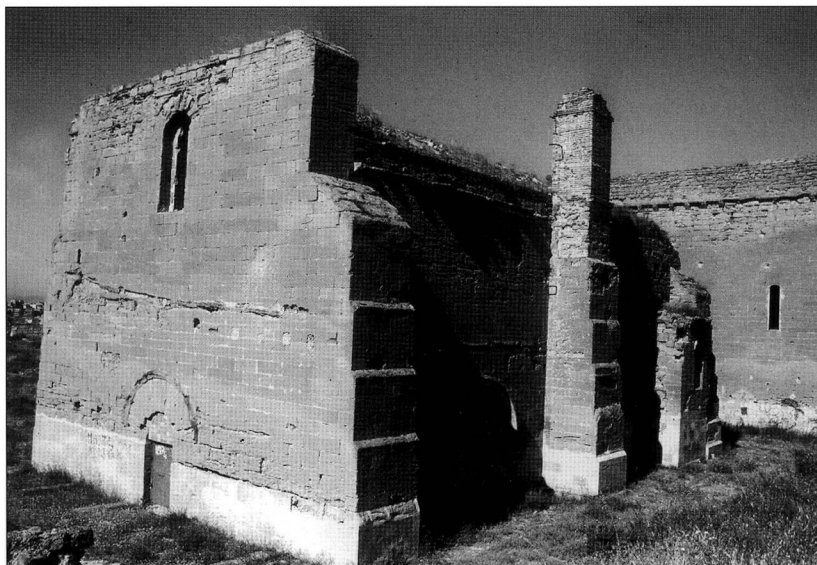


G. After the battle at the Spring of Cresson, 1 May 1187

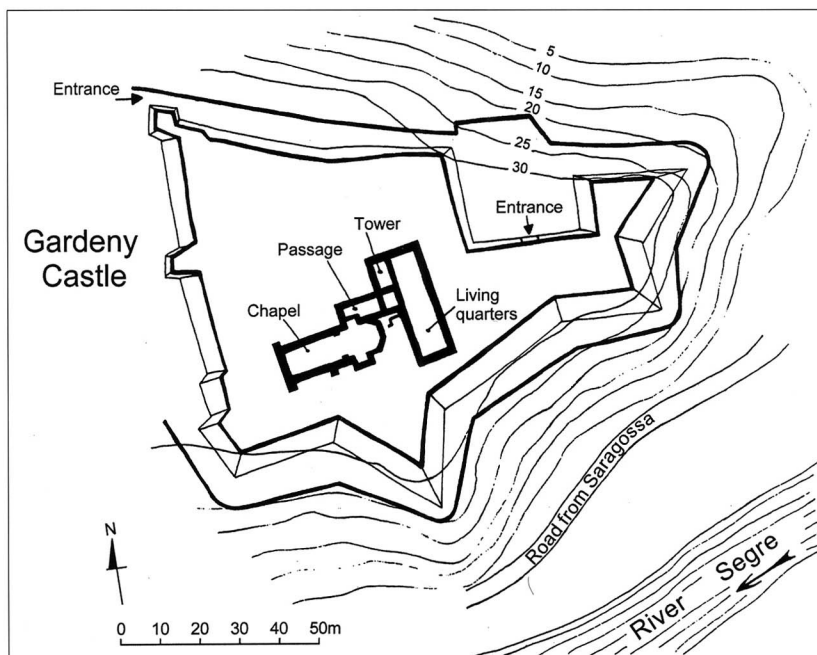


H. Templar knight of around 1290





The chapel of the Templars' castle of Gardeny in the kingdom of Aragon. The Templars were given the site of this castle in 1149, as a reward for their assistance in the Christian conquest of the city of Lleida. The first mention of the castle they constructed there dates from 1156. Gardeny was not one of the castles that defied the order for the arrest of the Templars in 1307, but some of the Templars from Gardeny joined the rebels at Monzón (Joan Fuguet Sans).



Plan of Gardeny castle after a plan of the nineteenth century (Joan Fuguet Sans). This shows the buildings essential to the Order: the living quarters, chapel and a defensive tower, surrounded by concentric walls. The basic plan of the castle – upper enclosure containing the living quarters, surrounded by a concentric enclosure at a lower level – dates from the time of the Templars, although part of the upper enclosure wall and the bulk of the lower enclosure wall were reconstructed by the Hospitallers in the 17th and 18th centuries.

records that the peacetime garrison there totalled 1,700 persons, which rose to 2,000 in time of war. On a daily basis in peacetime, the castle required 50 knights, 30 sergeant-brothers, with horses and weapons, and 50 turcoples with horses and weapons. There would also be 300 crossbowmen, 820 people involved in manual work and other duties, and 400 slaves – as this totals only 1,650, presumably these are rough figures. The garrison consumed over 12,000 mule-loads of wheat and barley annually.

Although the Templars produced a good deal of food on their estates in Outremer much of their grain would have been brought from the West. The Templars in Outremer imported large quantities of grain by

sea from Sicily. The order owned a few ships of its own, and also hired ships as and when they were needed.

The Templars' regulations, included in manuscripts of their Rule, laid down their daily timetable (see page 24). When they were not praying in the chapel they should be busy with some other useful work: seeing to their horses, instructing their squires, mending armour and equipment or making tent pegs. They were expected to put their work down when they heard the bell ring for chapel, unless they were in the middle of an essential task that could not be left. They generally had two meals a day, one in early afternoon and one at dusk, with a drink before they went to bed; but in Lent and on fast days they had only one meal, in the middle of the afternoon. Unlike traditional monks they were allowed to eat meat at meals, as they had to keep up their strength for fighting. The Order's regulations mention the brothers eating beef, mutton, cheese, fresh and salted fish, bread and green vegetables, and drinking wine. From archaeological excavations of their properties in the Holy Land, such as the Red Tower, we know that they also ate pork.

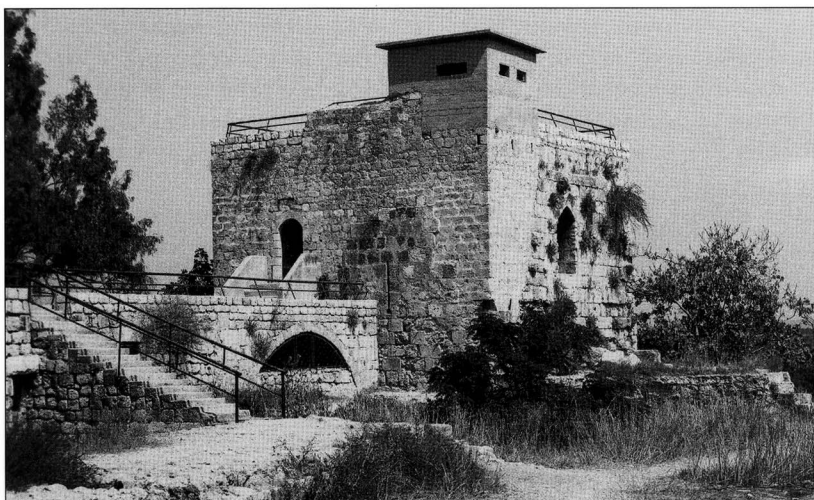
Training would have to be fitted into their day at an appropriate point. They retired to bed when it was dark, sleeping two to a room with a light always lit, as was normal practise in monastic orders. They got up at night to attend the service of Matins in the chapel, but then went back to bed and slept until dawn. This meant that in winter they would have a long night's sleep, but only a short sleep in summer. Possibly, like traditional monastic orders, they had an additional sleep in the afternoon in summer (like the modern siesta).

The brothers had promised when they joined the order that they would not own any personal property, they would not have sexual relations with anyone, and they would obey orders given to them by their commanders. Daily instructions were handed out in chapel before services. If the order was clearly unreasonable the brothers were allowed to refuse to obey; otherwise they should say: '*De par Dieu*' – 'for God's sake, I will do it', and go and carry out instructions. Although it would have been difficult for warriors who were used to organising their own lives to accept the authority of another, the standard of living within the

Order was better than that for most poor warriors of the time. Bishop Jacques de Vitry wrote about a man 'who never in his whole life in the outside world laid his head on a pillow'. He entered the Order of the Temple, and quickly became used to a life of comparative luxury. When he was without a pillow one night because the linen cover was being washed, he disturbed the whole convent with his muttering and complaining. Other poor brothers, said Bishop Jacques, got ideas above their social station after entering the Order and, given some ordinary task like guarding the gates,

Aerial view of Safed castle in northern Galilee (now in Israel), in 1917. The Templars built a castle here in the 12th century. In 1188 it fell to Saladin after a long and bitter siege, and remained abandoned until 1240, when it was returned to the Templars in a peace treaty. The bishop of Marseilles persuaded the Templars to rebuild it. It fell to siege by Sultan Baybars in 1266 and the Templar garrison was massacred. The site is now a park with woodland, and the ruins can no longer easily be seen from above (Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Abt. IV: Kriegsarchiv, BS-Pal. 520; copyright Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv).





The Templars in the East produced much of their own food from their own estates, and processed it for their own consumption. This is the Templars' mill at Da'uk, on the Nahr Kurdaneh or River Belus to the south of Acre, which ground the wheat produced on the Order's estates in the area for use by their headquarters at Acre (Denys Pringle).

became very proud and took advantage of their post to insult visitors and passers-by.

By contrast, when they were out on campaign the brothers were expected to live a rough life in the field. The Order's statutes set out how the brothers were to behave when they were out on campaign.

The master of the Order was in supreme military command, but could not begin a war without the consent of the central convent: the senior officials of the Order and the military brothers at the Order's headquarters. But according to section 106 of the Order's statutes: 'the marshal of the convent shall call the brothers to arms and give them orders wherever the master is', and the brothers were not to start loading baggage for a campaign or mount themselves until they had heard his order given. When they were commanded to mount, they should mount and ride slowly with their troop, with their squires behind them, and take up their position in the line of march. The Order's Standard-bearer or *gonfanier* would lead the Templars' forces, carrying the Order's piebald (black and white) banner. In Old French the banner was known as the *gonfanon baucant*, which means 'the piebald banner'. The brothers rode at a walk or an amble, each knight with his equipment on his packhorse in front of him. At night they should ride in silence; during the day they could talk to each other, but should be careful to ensure that their packhorses were in front of them, so that they knew where their baggage was and did not lose it. They were not supposed to break the line of march to water their horses, unless they happened to pass running water in peaceful territory, when it would be possible to let their horses drink without breaking up the line. This was because if the army became divided during the march it would be in danger from enemy ambush.

Campaigning in the Holy Land had many problems. During the Third Crusade, the crusaders discovered that the coast road south of Haifa had not been kept up, and was so overgrown with plants that neither foot soldiers nor horses could get past. The army had to take an upland route where the vegetation was sparser. In summer campaigns it was often difficult to find water, as the rivers dried up. It might be necessary to dig for some time into a river bed before finding good water. In contrast, the endless winter rain made armour rust and food rot, while

pack animals slipped in the mud and could not get up again. In addition to all this, there was the danger from enemy attack while on the march.

The Templars and Hospitallers' discipline on the march made them a highly valued part of a crusader army. During the Second Crusade, the French crusaders marched across Asia Minor, through mountainous country, constantly harassed by Turkish raiders. The crusaders suffered serious losses, but the Templars, who marched in disciplined order, were able to defend themselves. The crusaders' leaders decided to put the Templars in charge of discipline on the march. Under the Templars' command, the crusaders learnt to hold their position in the march and to stand firm if they were attacked. In 1191, during the Third Crusade, on the march south from Acre to Jaffa, the Templars and Hospitallers were put in charge of the vanguard and rearguard, the most dangerous positions for an army on the march.

When the time came to camp for the night, the gonfanier would decide where to set up the Order's camp, and the command would be given to make camp: 'Make camp, lord brothers, on God's behalf' (Rule, section 148). The chapel tent would be placed in the centre, with the marshal's tent, the tent where meals were served and the tents of other commanding officers. The brothers' tents would be pitched around these. Announcements were made to the brothers by a public crier, who camped next to the gonfanier. If the alarm were given because the Muslims had broken into the camp, the brothers near the break-in were to repel the enemy, while the other brothers were to go to the chapel to receive their orders. So, when the Muslims broke into the crusaders' camp during the siege of Damietta in 1219, throwing the crusaders into confusion, the Templars drew up their squadron and charged the Muslims, driving them out of the camp. Oliver of Paderborn, school master of Cologne, an eyewitness of the siege, wrote:

The spirit which fell on Gideon stirred up the Templars. The master of the Temple with the marshal and rest of the brothers who were present made a charge through a narrow exit and manfully turned the unbelievers in flight ... Thus the Lord God saved those who hoped in Him, through the virtue of the Templars and of those who worked with them and committed themselves to danger.

While in camp, or while in a castle in wartime, the brothers were not allowed to go out without permission, in case of ambush. Nor were they allowed to go out foraging or to reconnoitre on their own initiative. A lone horseman was very vulnerable to attack. Bishop Jacques de Vitry recounted an anecdote of a Templar caught in a Muslim ambush who saved himself by making his horse leap off the cliff road into the sea (the horse died, but he survived). Even a group of Templars together could be in danger of being overwhelmed by superior forces. During the Third Crusade, some Templars rode out as a protective escort for a group of squires who were cutting grass for horse fodder. They were ambushed by a larger Muslim force and almost overwhelmed. The Templars were able to hold off their attackers by dismounting and standing back to back to fight, each man covering his neighbour, but if they had not been rescued by a larger troop of warriors from the

crusader camp they would all have been captured or killed.

The Templars' camp itself was not closed to outsiders, as the brothers were allowed to entertain other Christians in the army. The army could carry its own food in its baggage train, but the statutes also refer to gifts of food being made to the brothers by outsiders while they were on campaign. Careful arrangements were made to ensure that every brother received fair rations and no one went hungry. Left-overs were distributed to the poor. Two knight-brothers received the same as three turcopoles, and two turcopoles received the same as three sergeant-brothers. The rationale behind this seems to have been that those who were most heavily armed and of highest rank received the most food. But in any case they were not expected to eat everything that they were given, as the poor expected to be fed from what was left.

When the time came to move off from the camp site, the brothers could take down their tents and pack them up with their basic equipment, but should not start to load the baggage on to their horses or mount themselves until the marshal gave the order. Before moving off, they should check the camp site carefully to ensure that nothing was left behind.

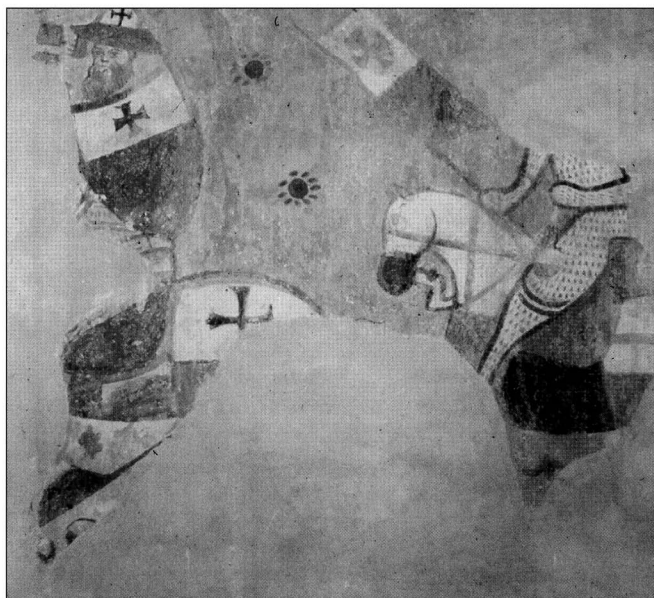
When the brothers were going to engage in battle, the marshal would command them to form into *eschielles*, squadrons. The Order's statutes laid down (section 102) that 'When they are established in squadrons, no brother should go from one squadron to another,' unless they got separated from their original unit in the confusion of the fighting on the battlefield. They were not to break ranks or charge without permission; the only circumstance in which they could move out of line was to go to rescue a Christian from the Muslims. The turcopolier lined up his turcopoles and the sergeant-brothers in the squadron with the knight-brothers. The sergeant-brothers drew up in close formation behind the knight-brothers and should follow them, in support.

The marshal, as the military commander of the Order, would lead the Order on the battlefield, but if the master was present he would normally lead. A pilgrim who was in the Holy Land sometime between 1167 and 1187 described how the Templars engaged battle, all together and singing a psalm as a battle cry:

Their bicoloured standard which is called the 'bauçant' (piebald) goes before them into battle. They go into battle in order and without making a noise, they are first to desire engagement and more vigorous than others; they are the first to go and the last to return, and they wait for their Master's command before acting. When they make the decision that it would be profitable to fight and the trumpet sounds to give the order to advance, they piously sing this psalm of David: 'Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name give the glory', couch their lances and charge into the enemy. As one body, they rampage through the ranks of the enemy, they never yield, they either destroy the foe completely or



A depiction of a battle at Damietta during the Fifth Crusade, from Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora*. The Templars played an important role in the crusade. In battle they were first on to the field and last to retreat, and defended the rest of the crusader army if it was routed by the enemy (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 16, fol. 54v: copyright: the master and fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).



Templars in battle, showing the Order's banner. The bearded Templar (see page 29) is now shown with his horse, complete with its covering in the Templar arms. The Templar knight just behind him is carrying the Order's banner. Although by papal regulation of 1240 the brothers were permitted to wear surcoats over their armour, this Templar wears chain mail without a surcoat, possibly an example of artistic licence. From the 13th-century fresco in the Order's church of San Bevignate, Perugia (Francesco Tommasi).

they die. In returning from the battle they are the last and they go behind the rest of the crowd, looking after all the rest and protecting them. But if any of them turns their back on the enemy or does not act with sufficient courage, or bears weapons against Christians, he is severely disciplined.

The brother who broke rank, wrote this eyewitness, lost his mantle and had to eat on the floor with the dogs for a year.

Military brothers who ran away from the battlefield would be expelled from the Order, although non-military brothers who were acting only as support troops were allowed to retreat from the battlefield if they saw that there was nothing they could do to assist. Brothers who went over to the Muslims were also

expelled from the Order forever. A slightly more lenient punishment was to take away a brother's habit. He could ask to have his habit restored to him after doing penance. A brother could lose his habit for striking another brother or another Christian, for threatening to desert to the Muslims, for killing or losing a slave, or for killing or maiming a horse. The same punishment was inflicted for undertaking an unauthorised raid against the Muslims, if it led to the Order suffering a defeat, with brothers dead and captured. A brother who was carrying the Order's banner in battle would lose the habit if he lowered the banner to charge, because the brothers followed the banner in battle, and if it were lowered it indicated that the Order had been defeated. Punishments could include beatings, and periods of fasting on bread and water. Brothers who had committed severe crimes would be put in chains and imprisoned, where they sometimes died. The Order's Rule includes a number of examples: one Brother Jacques de Ravane, commander of the palace of Acre, was put in prison because he made a raid on the Muslims without permission (section 610); while one Brother George the mason, who deserted to the Muslims and was brought back by force, was put in prison and died there (section 603). But the Order never imposed a death penalty, nor condemned brothers to mutilation. As a religious order the Order would not shed the blood of its own members.

Brothers' offences were discussed and judgements decided in the weekly chapter meetings in each commandery. Serious cases were brought before the provincial chapter once a year; if they were very serious, they were brought before the Order's general chapter meeting, which met once every few years. The brothers were not allowed to discuss the decisions of the chapter meeting with outsiders. This was normal in religious orders, but may have annoyed the relatives of brothers who had been punished, when they did not know the full details. The Order's discipline helped it to win its military reputation, but some outsiders thought that it was unreasonably strict.

EXPERIENCE OF BATTLE

The Franks of Outremer and the neighbouring Muslims maintained hostilities by frequent raids against each other rather than constant battle. Likewise in the Iberian Peninsula the Templars were generally involved in raids on Muslim territory rather than full-scale battle; which occurred only rarely. The brothers were also involved in the defence of fortresses, and in sieges of Muslim-held fortresses.

Who initiated a battle? The Templars took part in raids or *chevauchées* initiated by the king or other secular lords, as well as organising their own raids on enemy territory. On their own raids, they would often be joined by other Christian forces. The purpose of these was to terrify the enemy, to undermine the enemy's position and to enrich themselves by carrying off booty, such as cattle and sheep, and prisoners. Other expeditions were intended to intercept Muslim raiding parties and destroy them. Some raids were successful, but others were not.

Archbishop William of Tyre, in his history of the kingdom of Jerusalem written between 1170 and 1184, described a raid against an invading Turkish force near Hebron in 1139. The raid was led by the Templar Master, Robert de Craon, and a secular knight named Bernard Vacher carried the king's banner. The Turks won a decisive victory. In the mid-13th century Matthew Paris, monk and chronicler of the Benedictine abbey of St Albans in England, recorded in his *Chronica majora* or 'Great Chronicle' and in his 'History of the English' an attack by the Templars and Hospitallers on the castle of Darbsak in 1237. This castle in the Amanus March to the north of Antioch had been held by the Templars before Saladin captured it in 1188. The Templars hoped to recover it, but rode into an ambush and were heavily defeated. According to Matthew Paris, the Templars had been warned of the ambush and some wanted to turn back, but the commander of Antioch, William of Montferrat, refused to take their advice. This account may or may not be true, but it gives us some insight into how military decisions

A contemporary depiction of the battle at La Forbie (1244) between the Franks of the kingdom of Jerusalem and the Khwarezmians, showing the Templar standard-bearer fleeing the field to the right. In fact the Templar standard-bearer did not flee, and virtually all the brothers of the military religious orders in the Frankish army died on the battlefield. From Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 16, fol. 170v; copyright the master and fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).



were made in the Order: the commander of the expedition took advice from other brothers, but made the final decision himself.

Some raids were more successful. For example, the contemporary *Annales de Terre Sancte* recount that in June 1264 the Hospitallers and Templars went on a raid from Acre to the area of Ramla and Jaffa to recover the castellan of Jaffa, who had been captured by the Muslims. They raided as far south as Ascalon, where they encountered a Muslim force 300 strong, led by two emirs. They defeated this force, killing 28 of the Muslim warriors and the two emirs, and returned to Acre with much booty.

Not surprisingly, the Templars became involved in fighting while they were escorting Christian pilgrims around the holy places in Outremer. According to the pilgrim Theodoric, who was in the holy land between 1169 and 1174, the Templars and Hospitallers escorted pilgrims to the River Jordan and watched over them while they bathed in the river, in imitation of Christ's baptism in the Jordan. He also mentioned the Templars' castle of Quarantene nearby, and many other castles on the road from Jerusalem to Acre from which the Templars and Hospitallers guarded the road for Christian travellers. In around 1163 two eminent nobles from Poitou in western France, Geoffrey Martel, brother of the count of Angoulême, and Hugh le Brun of Lusignan, were on pilgrimage in the Holy Land. Having visited the holy places around Jerusalem they set out north to Antioch, with an escort of Templars led by the famous English nobleman Gilbert de Lacy, who had joined the Order of the Temple after a distinguished military career in the West. The party came under attack from the forces of Nur al-Din, ruler of Damascus, but the Templars defeated the attackers and drove them off.

In battle the Templars, with the other military religious orders, acted as shock troops, charging in a compact body to break up the enemy's lines. One eyewitness account of the battle of Montgisard in 1177 described the effect of the Templars' charge on the enemy:

Odo [de Saint-Amand] the Master of the Knighthood of the Temple, like another Judas Maccabaeus, had 84 knights of his Order with him in his personal company. He took himself into battle with his men, strengthened by the sign of the cross. Spurring all together, as one man, they made a charge, turning neither to the left nor to the right. Recognising the body of troops in which Saladin commanded many knights, they manfully approached it, immediately penetrated it, incessantly knocked down, scattered, struck and crushed. Saladin was smitten with admiration, seeing his men dispersed everywhere, everywhere turned in flight, everywhere given to the mouth of the sword. He took thought for his own safety and fled, throwing off his mail shirt for speed, mounted a racing camel and barely escaped with a few of his men.

The Templars' discipline and courage won them a great reputation both among the Muslims and in the West. In the early 13th century, Guiot de Provins, a poet turned Cluniac monk, wrote of them:

The Templars are most doughty men ... it is the order of knighthood. They are in great honour in Syria; the Turks fear

them greatly, they are like a castle or a wall against them; they will never flee in battle. Faith! So it would give me great grief if I entered their order, because I know that I would flee, I could never wait for the blows! I don't think I am crazy to say this, because they fight too fiercely. I will never be killed, if it so pleases God, for the sake of winning prestige or displaying boldness – I would much rather be a coward, and alive, than dead and the most esteemed man in the world.

Guiot summed up the problem that the Templars faced from their own side: they themselves were well disciplined and would not run away in battle, but they could not always rely on the rest of the Franks to support them. At the siege of Ascalon in 1153, according to an eyewitness account recorded in the Low Countries, the Templars were the first to break into the Muslim-held city. They fought their way into the central square and made a stand there, but the rest of the Frankish force failed to follow them and they were all killed. At the battle of Hattin on 4 July 1187, according to a contemporary letter to the master of the Hospitallers in Italy, the rest of the Franks did not follow the Templars when they charged Saladin's army, and the Templars were surrounded by the Muslim troops and killed or captured. The prisoners (with the exception of the master, Gerard de Ridefort), were executed on Saladin's orders after the battle. In a battle outside Acre on 4 October 1189, according to one contemporary writer, the Templars charged Saladin's forces, but went on too far ahead for the rest of the crusader army to follow them, and were surrounded and cut to pieces. Another contemporary wrote that as he described their deaths he wept at the thought that so often the 'holy legion of the Temple' bore the danger of battle alone.

Although the shock of a well-judged charge could enable the Templars to defeat a numerically superior army, there was a limit to the advantage that discipline could give over numbers. At the Spring of the Cresson on 1 May 1187 a small force of Templars and Hospitallers was defeated by sheer weight of numbers.

On the battlefield, brothers were supposed to remain with the Templars' banner. Those who became cut off from the main Templar force and could not get back to the banner should join another



A Western depiction of the Battle of Hattin, 1187, from Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora*. Saladin rides in from the left and seizes the relic of the True Cross from King Guy of Jerusalem, who struggles to hold it. (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 26, page 279 [140]; copyright the master and fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).

contingent of the Christian army, such as the Hospitallers. Brothers who were wounded should not leave the field without permission of their commander. Yet occasionally the Templars' discipline failed. After a successful cavalry charge the squadron was supposed to re-form to charge again, but the Templars did not always succeed in re-forming their ranks. At the battle of Marj Ayun in 1179 the Templars, led by Master Odo de Saint-Amand, and the Franks under King Baldwin IV, charged some scattered groups of Muslims, catching them by surprise and dispersing them. Count Raymond III of Tripoli and Master Odo, believing that the battle was won, took up a position on a hill overlooking the battlefield, while the infantry plundered. Then Saladin arrived with his main army in battle order. The Franks were taken by surprise and defeated. The king and Count Raymond escaped, but Master Odo was captured and died in prison.

As the Templars normally formed part of any large expeditionary force against the Muslims in Outremer or the Iberian Peninsula, they were frequently involved in sieges of fortified cities and of smaller fortresses. Although raiding could wear down the enemy, only the capture of fortresses could win control of the land. Contemporary commentators described the Templars' leaders giving military advice during sieges, and the Templars taking part in assaults. Apart from the siege of Ascalon in 1153, the Templars took part in the unsuccessful siege of Damascus in 1148, the unsuccessful siege of Harenc (or Harim) in 1177, the siege of Acre in 1189–91 and two sieges of Damietta in Egypt, 1218–19 and 1249. At Damascus and Harenc the defenders paid the Frankish besiegers to lift the siege, and the Templars were later

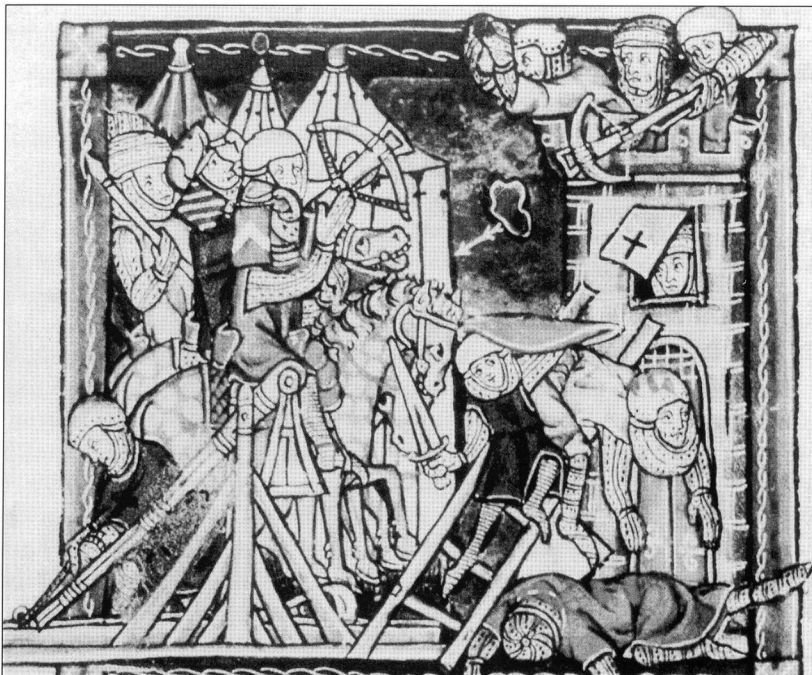
A siege scene from a late 13th-century manuscript of the First Crusade, showing a team of armoured men pulling the ropes of a man-powered *perrière*, a stone-throwing siege engine. The Templars had a *perrière* at the siege of Acre, 1189–91, during the Third Crusade. Note the relatively accurate representation of Muslim soldiers inside the castle (Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, MS. 828, fol. 33. Photograph credit: Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, Didier Nicole).



blamed by westerners for having advised the besiegers to accept the money rather than pressing on to take the fortress. The commander of the besieging force had to weigh up the costs of continuing the siege, and whether he had sufficient supplies to continue, against the advantage of finally capturing the fortress – and whether he would be able to hold it if he did so. In both of these cases it appears that the commander decided to cut his losses, and the Templars, with their extensive experience of warfare in the East, agreed with him.

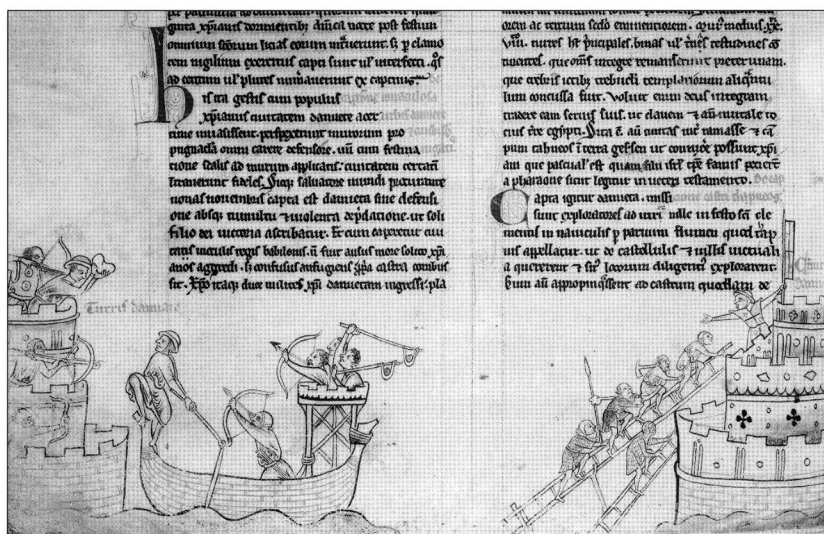
At Acre in 1189–91, and at the siege of Damietta of 1218–19, the Templars played an active role in the besieging force. They built siege engines which could bombard the walls of the fortress. At Acre they were reported to have a *perrière*. Technically this was a term for a traction stone thrower operated by several men giving a sharp tug on ropes attached to a pivot, but as it was described as causing considerable damage to the massive walls of Acre, it may have been a more powerful machine such as a counterweight trebuchet. At the siege of Damietta of 1218–19 they had a powerful counterweight trebuchet that had been given to them by the duke of Austria. Contemporary commentators do not tell us whether the Templars' own engineers – sergeant-brothers within the Order – constructed, maintained and operated these engines, or whether they hired engineers and workers to do this.

At the siege of Damietta (an important fortified port near the mouth of the River Nile) in 1218–19, the crusaders prepared ships to cross the river and attack the walls of the city. One of the Templars' ships was caught in the current and thrown close to the enemy bank, where the enemy attacked it with grappling irons and Greek fire. The Templars on board fought back bravely, but at last the Egyptian forces succeeded in boarding the ship to fight the Templars hand-to-hand. The ship was holed – observers did not know whether the Egyptians or the Templars



An early 14th-century manuscript depiction of a siege scene, showing a counterweight trebuchet about to be shot. The man on the far left is about to pull the rope which releases a sort of key to shoot the weapon. The trebuchet itself is, of course, shown much smaller than reality. The Templars used a counterweight trebuchet at the siege of Damietta during the Fifth Crusade (BL MS. Add. 10292, fol. 81v: by permission of the British Library).

A depiction of the siege of Damietta during the Fifth Crusade: attacking the city from boats on the river. Note the different weapons being used by the attackers: staff slings, bows and an iron flail. Water-borne assaults were as dangerous for the attacker as for the attacked: the Templars were involved in one such assault in which their ship ran aground and all aboard were drowned. From Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora*. (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 16, fol. 55v: copyright: the master and fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).



did this – and went to the bottom of the river, drowning everyone on board. Oliver of Paderborn wrote:

And just as Samson killed more dying than he had previously when alive, thus also these [Templar] martyrs dragged more with them into the whirlpool of water than they could have killed with the sword.

As owners of many fortresses, the Templars often had to defend their fortresses against siege by the Muslims. ‘Imad al-Din, Saladin’s secretary, described the Templars’ fortresses as impregnable and like lairs of wild animals. Although the Templars’ castles in the kingdom of Jerusalem fell to him, usually only after a long siege, in July 1188 Saladin was unable to capture the Templars’ tower at Tortosa. Their castle of Darbsak in the Amanus March surrendered after a siege of eleven days, after Saladin’s forces had mined one of the towers of the outer rampart. Baghras surrendered after a long bombardment. ‘Imad al-Din, who was stunned by the castle’s strong position, was amazed that the Templars ever gave in, but Saladin’s offer of terms – allowing the Templars to withdraw to Antioch in peace – had been a powerful incentive to surrender. In 1266 Sultan Baybars of Egypt persuaded the Templar garrison of Safed to surrender the castle with a similar promise of ‘life and limb’, but then had the defenders seized as they left the castle and executed.

The Templars did not always defend their fortresses to the death. If they judged that a fortress could not be held against a besieger and that there was no hope of relief, they would surrender it quickly. Archbishop William of Tyre described how King Amaury of Jerusalem (1163–74) entrusted a cave fortress in Transjordan in the kingdom of Jerusalem to the Templars. When Nur al-Din’s general Shirkuh came to attack it the Templar garrison surrendered without waiting for relief, and the king hanged them as traitors. It is not clear why the Templars did not wait for aid to come.

In 1268 when the Templar castle of Baghras came under siege by Sultan Baybars of Egypt (who had just captured the city of Antioch), one



Tortosa (Tartus) citadel, now in Syria. The citadel of Tortosa was given to the Templars by Bishop William of Tortosa in 1157. The Templars repelled an attack by Saladin in 1188. After the fall of Acre in May 1291 to the Mamluk sultan of Egypt, al-Ashraf Khalil, the Order reckoned that it could no longer defend Tortosa and took the decision to abandon the castle, which was evacuated on 13 August 1291. In 1300 the Order installed a garrison on the off-shore island of Arwad, which was captured by Sultan Al-Malik al-Nasir Mohammad of Egypt in 1302 (David Nicolle).

Templar brother took the initiative, went out of the castle and began to negotiate surrender terms. The experience of Safed had clearly taught the Templars that Baybars was not a general who would look kindly on defenders 'wasting his time' through a long siege. The commander of Baghras wanted to defend the castle and the brothers agreed with him, but the mercenaries said that they would leave, as they did not want to die. The commander and brothers discussed the matter and decided that they were very unlikely to be relieved because Antioch, to which they would normally have looked for help, had already fallen to Baybars. So they agreed to surrender the castle, but to destroy everything before leaving and go to the neighbouring castle of Roche Guillaume and repair it. The terms of surrender were agreed and they retreated, but they did not complete the work of destruction before their departure as planned.

Meanwhile, in Acre the master of the Order, Thomas Bérard, had heard that Antioch had fallen and Baghras was under siege. Knowing that the castle could not hold out and that he could not send relief, he sent a brother to order the garrison to surrender the castle and retreat to Roche Guillaume. When the messenger arrived he discovered that this was what they had done. But nonetheless the commander and brothers of Baghras were summoned before the Order's chapter meeting at the Order's headquarters in Acre, because they had surrendered before receiving the command to do so and because they had not destroyed everything before departing. The master and convent eventually decided that the commander and brothers of Baghras would not be expelled from the order for disobedience or for causing the Order loss, but they would have their habits taken away for a year and a day.

There were, then, occasions when even the Templars, brave warriors as they were, had to retreat. The non-fighting sergeant-brothers, if they saw that the brothers were losing and there was nothing they could do to help, were allowed to withdraw with the Order's equipment, so that it would not fall into enemy hands. The fighting brothers were not allowed to withdraw as long as the Order's banner was upright. Any brother who retreated before the banner was lowered would be expelled from the

Baghras Castle, now in Turkey. The Templars were given the castle during the 1130s, but after a hard-fought siege they surrendered it to Saladin in 1188. Saladin had abandoned the castles by 1191, when it was taken over by Leon, ruler of Cilician Armenia. The Templars tried to recover their castle, but Leon refused to give it up; the two parties did not make peace until 1216. In 1266 the Templars abandoned the castle as they knew that it could not be held against Sultan Baybars (David Nicolle).



Order. The Templars were (as the anonymous pilgrim wrote before 1187), generally the last to retreat from a battlefield, and with the brothers of the other military religious orders they protected the rest of the Christian forces while they withdrew. Their casualties were always high when the Franks or the crusaders were defeated. As in the case of Jacques de Vitry's story about the Templar and Blackie the horse, some Templars deliberately tried to become martyrs. A contemporary account of the aftermath of the Battle of Hattin told how a Templar called Nicholas, who had been captured by the Muslims and was condemned to be executed with the other brothers of the military religious orders, encouraged the other Templars to meet their martyrdom bravely.

If they were not executed by their Muslim captors, Templars captured on the battlefield would be imprisoned awaiting ransom. Some contemporaries reported that the Templars would not pay ransoms, except for a belt and a knife, which seems to be a way of saying that fighting was their ransom and if they were captured they would die rather than pay. But by the mid-13th century the Order of the Temple seems to have accepted that it was best to ransom brothers who were captured in battle. The Catalan translation of the Templars' rule states that brothers who had been captured should not wear their habits in prison, and if they were released they could not put their habits back on until they had spoken to the master – as if they ceased to be brothers of the Order through the shame of imprisonment.

Unlike the Hospitallers, the Templars did not have a large institution for the care of the sick and wounded, but they did have their own infirmary at their headquarters, where the sick and elderly were cared for. The infirmarer could give the brothers in the infirmary permission to have themselves bled (which was regarded as a cure for many illnesses), but they had to have the master's permission to have wounds treated or to take medicine. The Order had no medical experts of its own; if brothers were ill, a physician had to be employed to care for them.

When brothers died on the battlefield, the Order would try to recover the bodies to give them Christian burial, but this would not always be possible if the Order had been defeated. Brothers' graves were not necessarily marked; graves on Templar sites with effigies of knights are usually the graves of associate members of the Order. The Order



LEFT When the Franks were defeated by the Muslims in battle, those left alive who failed to escape were taken away as prisoners. When the French crusaders were defeated at Gaza in 1239, the scene depicted here, the Templars and Hospitallers were blamed for not giving more assistance to the crusaders, despite the fact that they had advised the crusaders against making their disastrous expedition. On the left, the crusaders flee the field; on the right, captives are taken away to prison in Egypt. From Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 16, fol. 133v; copyright: the master and fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).

would celebrate a service called 'Vespers for the dead' in chapel every afternoon at which the brothers prayed for the souls of dead brothers. When a brother died, a mass was said for his soul, prayers were said for the next seven days, and a poor person was fed with meat for forty days, for the sake of the dead brother's soul. Prayers would be said and a poor person fed for the soul of any associate of the Order who died or was killed while serving in the Order. However, the Order did not promote any of its dead brothers as saints. All brothers were spiritually equal within the Order and none were honoured above the rest.

MUSEUMS AND RE-ENACTMENT

After the dissolution of the Order of the Temple, the pope ordered that its property should be given to the Order of the Hospital, except in the Iberian Peninsula where new military orders were established. But many former Templar properties passed into private hands and never reached the Hospitallers. For example, in England Temple Denney in Hertfordshire, which had been where the old and sick English brothers lived, passed into the hands of Mary of Valence, countess of Pembroke, who converted it into a nunnery.

The Hospitallers repaired and extended many of the Templars' properties. After the dissolution of the monasteries in Britain and Ireland in the 16th century, these properties were sold. Some fell into disrepair and others were converted for secular use. In France, religious buildings were damaged or destroyed in the French Revolution, while in Germany property suffered in the religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries. In Hungary, the Balkans, Cyprus and Greece Christian property was destroyed or neglected under Ottoman government. As a result, much has disappeared, and where buildings survive they may be very different from those that belonged to the Templars.

BELOW The fortified village of La Cavalerie in Aveyron, France has recently been restored as part of a government project to revitalise the Aveyron area and to attract tourism. A reconstruction of the Order's banner has been hung from the fortified gate tower, which was built by the Hospitallers in the 15th century (the author).



Much of the former Templar property in the Middle East has been destroyed or seriously damaged by the ravages of time, enemy action or natural disasters. Some castles, such as 'Atlit, are still important military sites. The site of Safed castle is now a park. The castle of Baghras has been seriously damaged by earthquakes. The Templars' castle at Vadum Iacob, north of Galilee, is in the course of excavation. Most of the Templars' former headquarters at Acre is now under the sea, because the sea level has risen since the 13th century.

Many former Templar sites survive in Europe. Some are being sympathetically restored. The former Templar and Hospitaller sites in the Larzac area of central southern France are being restored and developed as tourist centres as part of a development scheme for this area. The 'conservatoire Larzac Templier et Hospitalier', based at Millau, organises a programme of regular events and is producing a series of publications. In England, the massive Templar barns at Cressing in Essex have been restored and there is a small visitor centre. The 'New Temple' church off Fleet Street, London, is now the chapel of the Temple Inns of Court. The priest in charge of the Temple church is still called 'the master of the Temple', as he has been since the Middle Ages. The church is open for visitors on certain days during the terms of the Inns of Court.

Many Templar churches survive in Britain, France, Germany, Poland and Italy, with castles and churches in the Iberian Peninsula, the Czech Republic and Croatia. Many of these churches are still in use for Christian worship and readers who visit them should remember this and treat these buildings with respect.

Some Templar re-enactment societies exist. However, there are many groups which call themselves 'Templars', which are not involved in re-enactment or in Templar warfare, but are religious or charitable organisations. Readers interested in re-enactment should take care to check the purpose of any 'Templar' group carefully before joining.



A modern monument to the Templars outside the church of the New Temple, London, showing the familiar image of two knights mounted on one horse (Nigel Nicholson).

GLOSSARY

Camera	Literally a chamber: a small house belonging to the order, administered by a single brother or leased out to a third party, and subject to the authority of a commandery.	Martyrdom	The suffering and death of a martyr.
Cappa	A long, all-covering monastic robe.	Master	The chief administrative official of the Order, elected by a committee of brothers.
Catholic	See Latin Christians.	Mongols	Nomadic mounted warriors from north-eastern Asia. They now live mainly in Mongolia.
Chapter	An administrative meeting within a religious order. The general chapter of the Templars was a general assembly of officials of the Order from the West and East, which took place at intervals of a few years. The meeting appointed officials, passed statutes and dealt with problems of discipline within the Order.	Outremer	Literally 'overseas'; the name given by western European Christians to the lands conquered by the crusaders and later in the eastern Mediterranean area.
Chausses	Leggings. Normally made of woollen cloth. By the late 12th century, chausses made of chain mail formed a part of a knight's armour.	Palestinian Franks	The western European Christians who settled in the Middle East after 1099. Most of the people on the First Crusade came from France or from the west of Germany, which were the lands that had historically been populated by the Franks, a Germanic people. The crusaders and the settlers who followed them called themselves Franks, and the Muslims called them Franks.
Coif	Chain mail hood to protect the head.	Penance	Some action to compensate God for sin (wrong doing or crime committed against God). Satisfactory penance wipes out the punishment due for the sin.
Commander	General title for an official in the Order.	Pilgrimage	A journey, usually with hardships, undertaken to a holy place for the purpose of penance.
Commandery	(Latin: <i>preceptoría</i>) A local centre of administration in the military religious orders, typically consisting of a manor house at the centre of an estate. The commandery buildings would include agricultural buildings, accommodation for the brothers and for travellers, and a chapel. Administered by a commander (Latin: <i>preceptor</i>).	Province	An administrative region in the Order, presided over by a grand commander.
Convent	A religious community. The central convent of the Templars was their administrative headquarters; the term also referred to the military personnel at that headquarters.	Receptor	Official who received applicants into the Order in a formal admission ceremony.
Franks	See Palestinian Franks.	Relic	A physical object left behind by a holy person, either part of their body or one of their belongings. Medieval Christians believed that God could perform miracles through the relic.
Gonfanon baucant	'The piebald banner', the Order's black-and-white standard.	Responsion	Proportion of the income of a commandery that was paid to the Order's headquarters each year. In theory it was a third of income; in practise it varied.
Gonfanier	The Order's standard-bearer, carrying the Order's banner in battle.	Sergeant-brother	A brother of the Order who had made the three religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, of lower rank than a knight and not a priest. He could play many roles: as a warrior, an administrator, a craftsman, a squire (assistant to a warrior) or a servant.
Hauberk	A protective shirt of chain mail, covering the body, arms and upper legs.	Surcoat	Long, loose, lightweight, sleeveless robe worn over chain mail armour.
Holy Land	Christian term for the region of Palestine where Jesus Christ lived and worked.	Turcopolier	A senior officer in the Order, responsible for commanding the turcoples and the military sergeant-brothers on the field of battle.
Holy War	War for a religious cause, fought in the name of God.	Turcoples	Lightly armed cavalry employed by the Order.
Infirmarer	Senior official of the Order, in charge of supervising the Order's infirmary where sick and elderly brothers were cared for.	Tympanum	Stone filling the space between the lintel of a doorway and the arch above it.
Latin Christians	Catholic (not Greek Orthodox) Christians, whose main religious writings are in Latin. Their religious leader is the pope, whose traditional 'seat' is at Rome.	Ventail	Chinflap of the coif, protecting the neck and chin.
Mamluks	Originally the word meant 'slave'. The Mamluks who seized power in Egypt in 1250 were elite warriors, the slave bodyguards of the sultan. Between 1250 and 1257 they controlled the sultans of Egypt; in 1257 the Mamluk Qutuz seized power in his own name. The Mamluks ruled Egypt, and much of the Middle East, until 1517.	Visitor	An official of the Order sent from headquarters to the Order's houses in the West, to ensure that the brothers of the Order were following proper procedures and practises.
Marshal	The senior military official of the Order.		
Martyr	A person who chooses to suffer death rather than give up their faith, for the glory of		

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COLOUR PLATE COMMENTARIES

A: KNIGHT TEMPLAR OF AROUND 1170

The knight is dressed much as a European knight of the period would dress, except that his armour and weapons are plain and undecorated, for use rather than for show. His equipment is that laid down in the Order's statutes, compiled in around 1165, and carried by the knights depicted in the 12th-century frescos in the Templars' church of Cressac-sur-Charente, France.

He wears a chain mail shirt or hauberk (1) with long sleeves and handcoverings, and a chain mail *coif* or hood covering his head and chin. The hauberk is slit front and rear so that he can ride a horse. The coif forms part of the hauberk. The front flap, the *ventaille* or 'ventilator' which covers the chin and mouth, can be untied for comfort, or laced closed above the left ear (detail 2). In the detail, note the leather lace around the head to which the helmet is laced. On his head, over the coif, he wears a one-piece rounded metal helmet with a nasal piece to protect his nose (3). This is tied securely to the band around his coif with leather laces.

On his legs he wears iron chain mail *chausses* or leggings (4) over cloth leggings. The chain mail laces up the back of his leg. On his feet he wears chain mail shoes with iron spurs on his ankles (detail 5).

Over his armour he wears a white woollen *cappa* with a red cross on the breast (6). The *cappa* is slit front and rear so that he can ride a horse. This *cappa* is based on the brief description by Pope Gregory IX in 1240, combined with the evidence from the frescoes in the Templars' church at Cressac-sur-Charente. The sleeves are tight-fitting and there is no hood. The correct position of the cross is unclear from the evidence. Archbishop William of Tyre recorded that the Templars wore a red cross on their mantles only; 13th-century pictures of Templars in their habits show the cross on the left breast of the mantle (that is, over the heart) and do not show the Templars' battlefield surcoats. The frescoes in the Templars' church at Cressac-sur-Charente show a cross on the right breast or the centre of the surcoat, or no cross at all; but in fact these knights may not be Templars. In action, a cross on the left breast would be hidden by the shield, but a cross on the right breast or in the centre of the chest would lose its symbolism because it would not be over the heart. In this plate the author has compromised by putting the cross on the left breast. It is possible that the Templars' battlefield *cappae* were pure white, without any cross.

This knight has a curved triangular shield slung across his shoulders, painted with the Templars' black-and-white insignia (7). The frescoes at Cressac-sur-Charente do not show this design; the earliest visual evidence of it is the drawings produced in the mid-13th century by Matthew Paris, chronicler of the Benedictine Abbey of St Albans in England. At this knight's left thigh, a sword is suspended in a plain leather scabbard from his plain leather swordbelt (8). He holds an ash-wood lance with an iron tip in his right hand.

Under his armour he wears a padded jerkin or *jupeau d'armer* (detail 9) which covers his body, arms and upper legs. Under this he wears woollen breeches (detail 10a), woollen leggings on his legs (10b), and a white linen shirt (10c).

B. AN ADMISSION CEREMONY IN THE 1280S

The ceremony takes place just after sunrise in the chapel of a commandery of the Order in north-western Europe, in the

chancel, before the altar. Here three brothers are being admitted; fashionable young noblemen dressed in secular clothes, they are kneeling on the floor before the 'receptor' or receiver, the local provincial commander of the Order, who is asking them questions to ascertain whether they can be admitted into the order. The provincial commander, a knight-brother, is wearing the white mantle of the order. In his hands he holds a small book containing the rule and statutes of the order, from which he is reading the questions that applicants must answer: are they married? Do they owe anyone money? Are they anyone's serf, or slave?. On his right is the chaplain of the commandery, who will recite prayers at the conclusion of the ceremony. On his left stand two sergeant-brothers as witnesses and assistants; one is holding in his arms two white mantles and a brown mantle, which the receptor will place around the newly admitted brothers' shoulders when they have given their vows. The walls of the chapel are richly decorated with scenes from the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ and a patron of the Order; the new brothers will be making their vows to 'God and Lady St Mary'. The Templars' chapels were always sumptuously decorated: as a Cypriot merchant commented during the trial of the Order, the Templars' churches were better decorated than those of any other religious persons in the world.

C. THE EQUIPMENT CARRIED BY TEMPLARS, ACCORDING TO THE ORDER'S STATUTES RECORDED IN 1165

(1) chain mail hauberk with a long sleeves and handcoverings, and a chain mail *coif* or hood covering the head and chin. The hauberk has a wide 'skirt' which is slit front and rear so that the wearer can ride a horse. Thin strips of cloth are sewn over the edges of the hauberk, to reduce chaffing; (2) iron *chausses*, showing the leather laces for lacing them up the back of the leg and for attaching them to the belt of the breeches; (3) (a) rounded helmet, made of a single piece of iron with iron rim and nasal, and showing the leather laces to attach it to the coif. Narrative sources are vague as to how many sets of laces each helmet had, but modern historians usually assume one lace each side of the face; (b) kettle hat, constructed from iron plates riveted to an iron framework, and showing the leather chin strap; (c) kettle hat based on the hat shown in the Templars' San Bevinante fresco, dating from the 1240s, showing the Order's colours; (4) (a) sword and (b) scabbard, showing the leather *renes* or hangings by which it is attached to the swordbelt. Contemporary drawings do not show how the *renes* are attached to the belt, and the fastening here is purely conjectural; (5) shield: constructed from strips of wood, held together by a flat metal boss at its centre, and covered with animal hide (either leather or parchment) front and back to produce a smooth surface. It normally hangs around the knight's neck from a long leather strap or *guige*; it also has leather arm straps (*enarnes*) so that it can be held firm on the arm in combat. It is curved to fit around the knight's body. (a) shows the front of the shield, showing the Order's colours, as drawn by the Benedictine monk Matthew Paris in the mid-13th century. (b) shows the rear, showing the neck strap or *guige* and the arm straps or *enarnes* riveted on to

Supplingenburg church, in the duchy of Brunswick in northern Germany. The Templars of the commandery of Supplingenburg would have used this church, but the church itself predated the Templars. The Templars may have been given the church as early as 1130, although the earliest charter from the commandery dates from the early 13th century (Jürgen Sarnowsky).

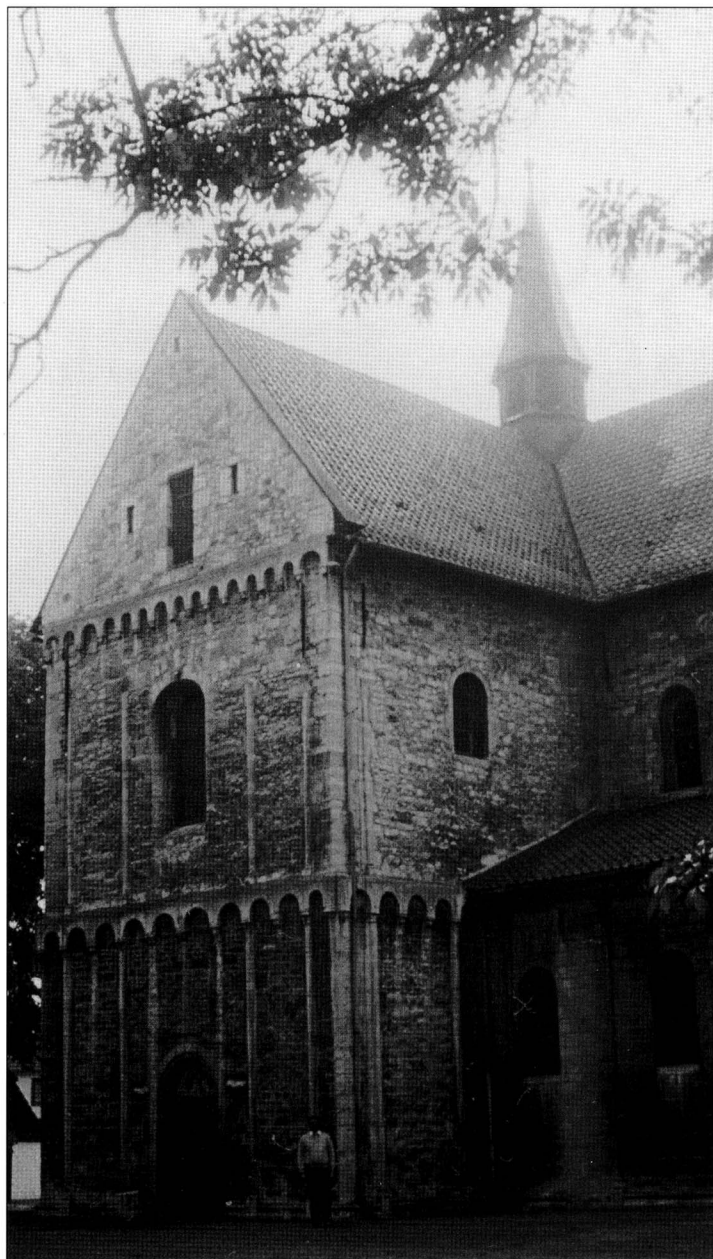
the shield, with a leather pad to ease the weight of the shield on the arm; (6) lance, four metres long and made from ash-wood with an iron lancehead; (7) the Templars carried a 'Turkish' mace, but the sources do not indicate what this looked like. Here are three possible examples: (a) mace with flanged head; (b) mace with knobbed head; (c) wooden club. The French word for mace, *massue*, is also the word for club, and the typical weapon ascribed to the Turks in Old French writing is the club. Therefore it is possible that the 'Turkish mace' was simply a club; (8) three knives: (a) dagger: there was no one design of 'arming dagger' at this period, but this is one possible design; (b) bread knife, with slicing blade; (c) small knife, with a two-edged blade.

D. A SCENE FROM THE 1230S, OUTSIDE A SMALL TEMPLAR FORTRESS IN OUTREMER

Two Templar knights, armed, mounted on horseback and carrying lances, charge each other in a practise joust. They wear no coverings over their chain mail, like the Templars in the frescoes in the Templars' church at San Bevignate in Perugia, Italy, painted in the 1240s. Their commander, dressed in the Templar knightly habit of white mantle over dark tunic, stands appraising their technique with a critical eye. Beyond the jousters, watching them with interest (perhaps one will fall? or break a lance?) stand two assistants: one sergeant-brother, in his dark habit, and one servant of the Order. Each holds upright in his arms, butts resting on the ground, a bundle of four spare lances for the jousters. The splintered remains of two broken lances lie on the sandy ground near the jousters, the result of an earlier joust.

E. CAMP SCENE: DEPICTING A TEMPLAR EXPEDITION INTO MUSLIM-HELD TERRITORY DURING THE 1240S.

The tents are arranged with the chapel tent in the centre and the knight-brothers' tents around the chapel tent. A priest-brother stands outside the chapel tent, talking to the marshal. The marshal's tent is next to the chapel tent. The banner outside it is the banner shown in the fresco in the Templars' church of San Bevignate in Perugia, Italy, dating



from the 1240s. The mess-tent stands beyond the marshal's tent: note the plume of smoke from the fire. Two Templar knights, companions and assistants to the marshal, check their kit in the opening to the marshal's tent. In front of the tent nearest to the viewer, a Templar sergeant and his servant check his weapons and a sergeant-brother leads a warhorse whose coverings bear the Templars' arms.

F. THE TEMPLARS' CAVALRY CHARGE, IN A SCENE OF THE MID-13TH CENTURY

Led by the marshal, carrying the banner, the Templars charge in a unit, so close together 'that an apple thrown into their midst would not hit the ground without touching a man or



LEFT TOP The Templars' castle of Miravet in Aragon. Count Ramon Berenguer IV of Barcelona, ruler of Aragon, conquered it in 1153 from the Muslims of al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) and entrusted it to the Templars. The Templars reconstructed the fortress to improve its defences. In 1307, at the beginning of the Order's trial in Aragon, the Templars of Miravet resisted arrest and defied a siege by the forces of King James II of Aragon until December 1308 (Joan Fuguat Sans).

RIGHT BOTTOM Aerial view of the Templars' castle of La Fève, about eleven kilometres south of Nazareth. The Templars built this castle before 1172 to guard a water-source on the road from Acre through the Vale of Jezreel, much used by Christian pilgrims. It was an important centre for the Order's military activity, and on 1 May 1187 the Templar garrison took part in the battle against Saladin's forces at the Spring of the Cresson, some eighteen kilometres to the north-east. After destroying the Order's forces at Cresson, Saladin was able to capture the castle easily. This view was taken in 1917 (Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Abt. IV: Kriegsarchiv BS-Pal. 527: copyright Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv).

horse'. Lances are couched, shields across chests, legs braced in stirrups, body braced against saddle bow and reins released ready for impact. Immediately behind the marshal comes a group of five knights under the commander of the Knights, who carries a second banner furled around his lance. If the marshal's banner should fall, he will unfurl his banner as a rallying point for the brothers. Behind them, half-concealed by the dust raised by the charging knights, the turcopolier waits with the Templars' sergeant-brothers. With them the rest of the Christian army waits in line, ready to follow the Templars into the breach in the enemy's lines: there is a squadron of Hospitallers, and squadrons made up of various Christian pilgrims from overseas. Their different arms shown are hypothetical.

G. AFTER THE BATTLE AT THE SPRING OF CRESSON, 1 MAY 1187

The local people strip the dead and take relics from the corpse of the marshal of the Templars, Jakelin de Maily. They will keep these relics and venerate them in memory of his courageous death fighting for Christendom on the battlefield. Around Brother Jakelin lie the corpses of many Muslim warriors whom he has killed in his last stand.

LEFT A group of bearded men, wearing white *cappae* or monastic robes, standing at the window of a religious house, facing a lion: from a fresco on the west wall of the Templars' church of San Bevignate, Perugia. As they are illustrated in a Templar church, they must have represented something significant to the Templars. They may represent Templars resisting the devil in the form of a lion, or disciples around a religious man who is drawing a thorn from the lion's paw – but note that, as none of them have obvious halos, they are probably not saints. As they wear white (though without the red cross on the breast of their clothes) it is just possible that they represent the founders of the Order defying the devil (Francesco Tommasi).

Perhaps five hundred Christian warriors died in this battle, which spread over a wide area. The ground is scattered with the stubble from the wheat that was growing in these fields until a few days previously, when it was harvested; and with darts and arrows fired by the Muslim archers and the Christian crossbowmen.

H. TEMPLAR KNIGHT OF AROUND 1290

Again, the knight is dressed as a European knight of the period would dress, except that his armour and weapons are plain and undecorated. This figure is based on the frescoes in the Templars' church of San Bevignate in Perugia, Italy, but amended to reflect changes in armour during the second half of the 13th century. He wears a chain mail coat or *hauberk*, shorter than that worn by the knight of 1170 (1), covering his body, arms and hands. To protect his head and face he has a fully-enclosed helmet or *helm* (detail 2), made of iron plates riveted together. Eye-slits give the wearer a restricted view, and ventilation holes allow him to speak as well as to breathe, although his voice is distorted by the helmet. The helmet fastens with leather laces to his chain mail hood or *coif*. The laces are riveted on to the interior of the helm.

His chain mail coif is separate from his *hauberk*. It is a one-piece hood, lacing up the back of the head. The knight wears a padded coif under it, giving the top of his head a flattened appearance (detail 3). Under his mail shirt he wears a padded jerkin (detail 4). By this period some knights were wearing cloth-covered 'coats of plates' under their hauberks to give additional protection to their bodies (see hypothetical reconstruction in detail 5). These 'plates' could be of whalebone, horn and boiled leather as well as iron or steel.

Chain mail leggings or *chausses* and foot coverings, worn over woollen leggings, fully cover his legs and feet. In addition, his legs could be protected by leather *cuisse*s (literally 'thigh protectors') (detail 6). By this period, some knights were wearing additional metal protection on the knees (detail 7). He has the latest design of rowel spurs on his ankles (detail 8). He wears a surcoat of white linen cloth, with the Order's red cross on the left breast. The shield slung around his neck bears the Order's white-and-black arms. His sword hangs in a scabbard at his left, attached to his leather swordbelt (detail 9). He holds an ash-wood lance in his right hand, with a steel tip.



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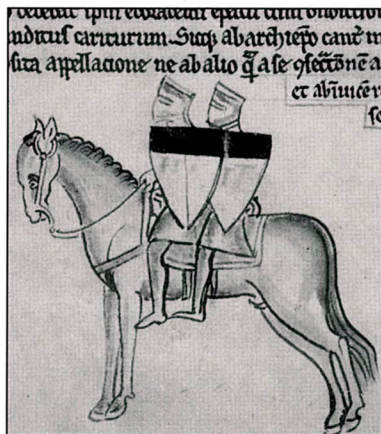
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